LITERARY LEISURE,

OF

RECREATIONS

OF

SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

" Salva res est, philosophatur quoque jam :
" Quod erat ei nomen ?—Thesaurochrysonicochrysides !"

PLAUTUS.

" All is safe :—he is actually setting up for a philosopher.—
Pray what's his name ?—Thesaurochrysonicochrysides !"

VOL. I.

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TO THE

EDITORS

OF THE

MONTHLY REVIEW.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is with no view of obtaining an undeserved favourable suffrage in your monthly labours that I inscribe the following sheets to you; on the contrary, I mean to profit by your judicious admonitions, and either in future write better, or write no more. I have not concealed in the following Papers the pleasure and advantage I have derived from perusing your valuable Miscellany; and I here express my earnest wishes that labours

so

so well applied, and so admirably conducted, may long continue to enlighten the age. And if, Gentlemen, in return for this my Dedication, you would pity the proverbial poverty of an Author, and present me with all the volumes of the Monthly Review, except those since the * * * *, I should be possessed of an invaluable compendium of the Literature and Philosophy of the age, and you would be entitled to the everlasting gratitude of

GENTLEMEN,

Your zealous admirer,

And faithful humble servant,

SOLOMON SAUNTER.

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LITERARY LEISURE.

VOL. I.

LITERARY LEISURE.

No. I.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1799.

IN order to obtain admittance into any of the numerous ſocieties into which mankind are divided, ſome peculiar and ſpecific qualification is neceſſary. The Spectator, who has ſo humorouſly deſcribed ſome of thoſe ſmaller confraternities known by the name of *clubs*, has tranſmitted to poſterity thoſe individual pretenſions, without which the candidate muſt be excluded. One of theſe clubs admitted any man, provided his Chriſtian name was George: another inſiſted on the ſurname of King. One ſociety required a certain proportion of avoirdupoiſe weight to ſecure the gravity of its members: another refuſed every man who was too large to be ſtuffed into an eel-ſkin. The

greater diviſions of ſociety ſtickle in the ſame manner for peculiar requiſites. Thus a phyſician cannot be admitted without a bag-wig; nor is a barber looked on as initiated without a long pole; a ſtage and a merry-andrew are conſtituent parts of a mountebank; and a Peer is no Peer without a patent. The civic hug is neceſſary to conſtitute a French Citizen; and a certain fondneſs for throat-cutting is an indiſpenſible ingredient in a modern Philanthropiſt.

Well aware of the neceſſity of poſſeſſing the proper requiſites, I ſtand forth, unabaſhed, a candidate for the name of Author. I can ſhew three indiſputable claims to the honour demanded, either of them ſufficient to entitle me to ſtrive for the laurel crown. I am an idle man, a valetudinarian, and a humoriſt. Volumes might be written on each of theſe texts, to prove them due qualifications to enable a man to ſit at the common-council board of Literature; but their merits muſt be ſo ſelf-evident, that I ſhould conſider it as an inſult on my readers were I to attempt to ſet them forth.

The further buſineſs of this paper ſhall be to announce myſelf more in form to the world. Many new authors have looked on this as a difficult and unpleaſant undertaking, and have

made many witty and ingenious compariſons reſpecting the awkwardneſs of the ſituation. For my part, I confeſs, I neither ſee nor feel the leaſt awkwardneſs in it. Does the comet bluſh becauſe millions gaze at it as a novelty? Be my pen my herald, and let it announce to the world, that I, Solomon Saunter, am the ſecond ſon of the reſpectable family of that name, whoſe abode, like that of Ælia Lælia Criſpis, is every where and no where. The antiquity and reſpectability of my houſe no one will, I think, dare to deny. Its innumerability hath now and then been a trouble to myſelf; for the ſwarms of relations who prove themſelves of my blood by their propenſity to doing nothing, are ſometimes extremely inconvenient to me.—When a family branches out into ſuch endleſs ramifications, it is impoſſible it ſhould ſupport all its remote connections in eaſe and affluence, particularly where the objects themſelves plead their idleneſs as the teſt of their relationſhip. Therefore, though I confeſs the Saunters are poſſeſſed of very valuable and eminent kindred, and though many of the Nobility, both male and female, many warriors and ſtateſmen, and numbers of all the learned profeſſions, are proud to acknowledge that our blood runs in their veins,—though we are as unable as the Northern Eſquimaux to count the number of elegant females who prove their proximity to us in all the daily and nightly

B 2 public

public places of resort this refined kingdom affords; yet I must allow that now and then a sturdy beggar wounds my heart with producing testimonials of affinity; and some of my ancestors have been so imprudent in their matrimonial connections, as to mingle the noble blood of the Saunters with the very refuse and dregs of society. These, however, are comparatively few in number to the eminent and affluent part of my family: and as every one of my readers must at least be acquainted with many of my cousins, and some of them may stand in that degree of relationship themselves, I have no doubt but that I shall be kindly treated by all, and by many applauded and recommended, till I become as universal a favourite as *the man with the short face*.

Annoyed as I have occasionally been by these numerous claims of affinity, I have rationally determined not to increase them, and that no future Saunter shall curse the memory of Uncle Solomon for the number of descendants he left behind him. I am therefore a bachelor; indeed, the cares of a family and the society of a wife would too much invade that indolence which makes a conspicuous part of my character; and no wife would pay so much attention to my wants and wishes, to my nervous feelings, and to all the train of infirmities that are included in the word *valetudinarian*, as the old

woman

woman who nurſed me when an infant, and who [illegible]s my bed and ſweeps my room now I am a man. She too, as [illegible] encouraged that ſingular bias in my temper, which has ſince entitled me to the denomination of a humoriſt, can better comprehend the ſymptoms of that diſeaſe which at time breaks out upon me; and can better indulge me, and modify circumſtances to pleaſe me, than any lady I ever knew. This old woman then, and a cat compoſe my houſehold; but though I love domeſtic peace and privacy, I lead by no means a ſolitary life.

My reſidence is in London, the great theatre of amuſements, the reſort of faſhion, and not more the hive of the bee, than the receptacle of the dr[illegible] London, a man may be idle without fatigue, valetudinarian without contempt, and a humoriſt without controul. In London, idleneſs may, without exertion, aſſume the garb of philoſophy. No man is watched by his attentive neighbours, nor are his actions expoſed to the critical examination of the piercing eye of curioſity. I have often wondered how any mere mortal had courage to reſide in the country. Many of my relations, I know, whom I never ſuſpected of abſolute perfection, have, indeed, that fortitude; and, to judge by their converſation, and the letters with which they ſometimes favour me,

moſt precious plagues they muſt be to their neighbours. To this eye of obſervation I cannot venture to ſubmit myſelf, and therefore fixed my abode in London.

I live in a very elegant part of the metropolis, in the houſe of a worthy widow gentlewoman, who occupies the ground-floor and garrets, and has reſigned to me the two middle ſtories of her houſe. I own I preferred this ſtation, and founded my preference not on the many apophthegms which all great writers have left behind them on the advantages of the middle ſtation, but on the daily exerciſe to which it obliged me. Having been, at one period of my life, inclined to grow corpulent, I calculated that the aſcending and deſcending between thirty and forty ſtairs ſeveral times in the day, was more advantageous exerciſe than wandering on the ſmooth pavement of London, or lounging in Hyde Park.

My income, which is well ſecured on the eſtate of my elder brother, enables me to live as I like; and though I have by no means a ſettled and regular plan of life, the great maſs of my days paſſes on in an unvaried and uniform tenor. I riſe about twelve, breakfaſt at ſome one of the neighbouring coffee-houſes, and by three have read all the newſpapers.

newſpapers. I then ſtroll up and down Pall-Mall, St. James's Street, and Bond Street, arm-in-arm with ſome of my family; and I defy any body to diſcover the Author among the ſtrings of couſins that amuſe themſelves with meaſuring the length and breadth of thoſe ſtreets ſo repeatedly. I uſually join them in their foraging parties, as they were wittily termed by one of our moſt brilliant relations; and then lounge in Hyde Park till it is time to dreſs and go to dinner.

As I am very agreeable, very well-looking, and very much of a gentleman, my invitations to dinner are every day very numerous; and I ſometimes break away from my kinſmen when the clock at St. James's points to ſix, with a precipitancy which proves to them the eagerneſs I feel to join ſome charming party: but I am uſually bewildered with the multiplicity of claims, all equally attractive; and not unfrequently prefer a mutton-chop or a poached egg by my own fire-ſide, with my companionable cat on the elbow of my chair. The next morning brings with it the neceſſity of calling on my ſeveral friends to apologize for having failed them the preceding evening; and by this means I have it in my power to obſerve all the various modes by which anger, petulance, and contempt are expreſſed. My heart is ſometimes charmed with the jealouſy

I have excited, and my vanity gratified by the abuſe I receive. So powerful, however, are the charms of my manner and converſation, that I uſually convert anger into regret, petulance into ſubmiſſion, and contempt into humility; and receive not only a pardon for my paſt fault, but that friendly general invitation which enables me to repeat it in future.

As, notwithſtanding the blood of the Saunters flows unmixed in my veins, I have, by ſome means or other, imbibed a ſpice of philoſophy, I contrive, out of theſe faſhionable and important avocations, to find, now and then, a few leiſure hours, which are what I mean hereafter to devote to the amuſement and improvement of my countrymen and women. As I am a valetudinarian, I am ſometimes obliged, and as a humoriſt, I am now and then inclined, rather to repoſe in my elbow chair, than to exert my powers of mind and body in the ſtrenuous idleneſs I have before deſcribed. As an idle man, no one will expect my lucubrations to contain any deep reſearch, or any ſevere morality; and I doubt not but the account I have here given of myſelf, will diſpoſe all claſſes of readers to give me their decided ſupport. To the more excellent half of the ſpecies—the "Porcelaine clay of human kind,"—I ſhall dedicate many of my hours; and I hereby invite the con-

tributions

tributions of all my loving fellow-citizens, whether thoſe who imagine fame and happineſs to be hid in the voluminous folds of a neckcloth, or thoſe who breathe not the atmoſphere of faſhion. Solomon Saunter, with a philanthropy unparalleled, opens his arms to all his countrymen, and doubts not but, by their aſſiſtance, and his own ſingular merits, he ſhall render this paper the grand receptacle of wit, elegance, and ingenuity,—the great ſtorehouſe whence future authors will ſteal all their beſt materials,—the mirror of the age, and the wonder of poſterity.

My readers will certainly have the goodneſs to give me credit, on my *ipſe dixit*, for a ſuperabundant ſhare of benevolence, learning, acuteneſs, faſhion, and vivacity. It is my good fortune to have been born in an age where candour and generous confidence are leading features. The world is ſo univerſally good-natured, that it is ever willing to take a man's character on his own word; nor can I ſee any reaſon for the former illiberal and happily exploded obloquy thrown on egotiſm. Who can be ſo intimately acquainted with a man's merits as himſelf? Who can ſo juſtly appretiate his poetical flights, his ardent reſearch, his keen acumen, his ready ingenuity? Fortunately, a man's own word is now taken on theſe points; and I am ſure, of whatever metal

the

the age may in other reſpects be compoſed, this is the golden age of Authors. I remember I was broaching this opinion the other evening in company, when a young lady, who ſat at my right hand, turned ſuddenly round upon me, and with a very ſignificant look, ſaid, "Braſs highly poliſhed reſembles gold."

I have wandered from my ſubject. I was introducing my own good qualities to my countrymen; and when I aſſure them that I mean to apply all theſe valuable and ſhining acquiſitions ſolely to their amuſement and emolument, I expect to have my name enrolled among the Hanways and Howards of the age. There is not one ſubject that I mean to exclude from my plan. I was at firſt going to proteſt againſt *politics*, but ſome later reflections have determined me againſt the excluſion. I will juſt ſtate the reaſons which have fixed my reſolution.

From the character I have drawn of myſelf, no one will expect that I ſhould lay claim to the character of a deep thinker; and I have all my life been led erroneouſly to ſuppoſe that *politics* required ſevere application and ſerious ſtudy:—from any thing of this kind, the nature of the Saunterer revolted. I abjured the purſuit, and did all in my power to prevent it from ever becoming the topic

of

of converſation in my preſence; but upon obſerving how univerſally my countrymen at large, and many of my family in particular, underſtand the very depths of the ſcience,—nay, how admirably it is adapted even to the comprehenſion of children, as is daily made to appear in the numerous publications written profeſſedly for them, in which "The Gordian knot of Policy is unlooſed, familiar as their garter,"—I no longer ſhrink from its formidable aſpect—I ſee not why the leiſure hours of Solomon Saunter ſhould not be devoted to a reſearch which thoſe, who dedicate the ſublimeſt abilities to the improvement of infants, deem a ſuitable amuſement for the nurſery: and I make no doubt of arriving in time to as great excellence in this ſcience, as I profeſſedly have attained in the other walks of intellect.

One caution I muſt give to my numerous and curious readers;—though I have told them ſo much about myſelf, I warn them not to think that I have told them all. Let them remember how many varieties—how many indeſcribable ſhades of character are expreſſed in the word *humoriſt*; and let them not therefore be ſurpriſed if, in the courſe of theſe my recreations, which I intend to ſhare with the community, I diſcover many qualifications which I have not here enumerated, and appear, as the wind varies, a deep

philoſopher,

philosopher, a learned critic, a man of fashion, a sentimental jargonist,

And their very humble servant,

SOLOMON SAUNTER.

No. II.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1799.

MY readers will probably accuse me of inconsistency with the character I have drawn of myself in my first Number, as an idle man, if I leave them to suppose that I have undertaken by myself the more than Herculean task of reforming the errors of the age. The Spectator, my immortal predecessor, made his readers intimately acquainted with the characters, persons, and pursuits of the sociable club in which he presided. The Mirror presumed

presumed not to reflect the ideas of one solitary individual. The Guardian introduced us to the whole Lizard family;—and Isaac Bickerstaff was occasionally assisted by his sister Jenny, to say nothing of his familiar Pacolet.

After such respectable authorities, it will, perhaps, be expected that an idle man and a valetudinarian should seek to establish some partnership in his labours, to relieve him from the packhorse drudgery of addressing the Public at stated periods, whether sick or well, indolent or busy. But let it be remembered that to these two grand characteristics I added a third—that I was a humorist.

Now is there to be found in this age of gaiety, when the spirit of chivalry is wholly extinct, one mortal bold enough to become the associate of a humorist? Is not a humorist, gentle readers, a being accustomed to indulge the caprice of the moment, till at length he hath no other delight than to vary his whims with as much celerity as the thin clouds of evening change their fantastic forms? A creature who is grave or gay, sentimental or satirical, as the wind blows from north or south, from west or east? A wretch who, in the midst of a philosophical discussion, is perhaps led away by some conceit to pursue a totally different subject;

ſubject; and who is, at different times, more diametrically oppoſite to himſelf, than the frozen Icelander is from the Mercurial inhabitant of the Sicilian ſhore? And when to the character of a humoriſt is added that of a valetudinarian, who would venture to ſubject his talents to the controul of ſo heterogeneous an animal?

Yet let it not be imagined that I depend wholly on myſelf and my own pre-accumulated ſtores for carrying on the ſtupendous work which I deſtine henceforth to occupy my leiſure hours. Great as is my knowledge, and numerous as are the ſamples of every kind with which my pericranium abounds, I am not yet ſo deeply infected with autorical vanity, as to rely on myſelf alone for raiſing an edifice which I mean to be the delight of the preſent race of men, and the wonder of poſterity,—an undertaking by which I intend to convince all ſucceeding ages of that truth, which hath been ſo often repeated ſince the days of Homer, that they (our future deſcendants) can never hope to equal us, their great progenitors. It is my full intention to tranſmit to our great grandchildren ſuch a picture of the virtuous, noble, elegant, and wiſe manners of the preſent age, as will teach them all to regret that they were born ſo late; ſince every one would certainly prefer to be rotting in the

ſame

ſame grave with an illuſtrious predeceſſor, than to be breathing the ſame air with his degenerate deſcendants.

The laudable ambition I feel to render this, my preſent undertaking, an everlaſting monument of the high deſert and virtuous enterpriſe that diſtinguiſh the preſent age, has induced me to caſt my eyes around the numerous circle of my acquaintance, and to fix on certain individuals as beſt calculated to aſſiſt me in my reſearches into life and manners.

Though I have not inſtituted any thing like a club, or allowed any member of my ſociety to have any thing like a vote equal to my own on any ſubject immediately relative to this paper, I do occaſionally collect a few friends around me, from whom I obtain ſuch information as is neceſſary to give to this undertaking that pleaſing variety and agreeable zeſt which alone can render any thing of the kind palatable to an age ſo refined in matters of taſte; and as I wiſh to give my readers all the pleaſure I can, I mean in this paper to introduce them to the acquaintance of thoſe valuable connections, whoſe labours will ſo curiouſly incorporate with mine, as to appear all of one web.

Though,

Though, from the ſketch I have given of myſelf in my firſt Number, it ſhould appear that no one can be better qualified for the department of faſhion; yet, as it is now the cuſtom to do nothing one's ſelf that can be performed by the aſſiſtance of others, I have drawn ſtill tighter the knot of intimacy between myſelf and a worthy couſin of mine, who, being ſeveral years my junior, can better bear the ſlavery which an attendance on faſhionable manners does undoubtedly require!—This gentleman, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Sir Brilliant Saunter, is about five-and-twenty, has good eyes and teeth, walks with the air of the firſt faſhion, knows every innovation in dreſs, is a perfect adept in the myſteries of a modern dinner, knows the right moment to admire the ſinging at the Opera, and the dancing of the Ballet—in ſhort, is perfectly qualified to decide on every queſtion that may ariſe on the important ſubject of *ton.* From him I hope to receive a variety of faſhionable anecdotes—a minute account of the variations in dreſs; and by his means I truſt I ſhall be enabled to prevent country gentlewomen from being above a week behind-hand in the changes of the mode!

My ſecond coadjutor is William Whiſſle, Eſq. a gentleman who gave up the name of Saunter for an eſtate, but he does not therefore ceaſe to be

conſidered

confidered as a member of our honourable houfe; indeed, he is fuch an ornament to it, that it would be a general lofs to us if fo accomplifhed a relation were difowned for fuch a trifle.

Billy Whiffle is a man of the moft accommodating manners poffible; his good humour is invincible, and his good breeding unqueftionable; he has an infinitude of fmall talk, and fuch perpetual action in every part of his body, as prove his natural talents for oratory. His acquaintance is univerfal: you can fcarcely mention a name but Billy Whiffle knows accurately the whole hiftory of the family, can repeat every anecdote to its praife and difpraife that has occurred within the two laft generations; and if his talent does not particularly point to drawing characters, he excels in narrative. If there happen to arife any fubject of the kind on which he is not perfectly well informed, he will fpare no pains to obtain the full intelligence, and will return to atone for his want of precifion by an accurate relation of every circumftance. Add to this, that Billy Whiffle is welcome every where; he has no ferious purfuits to interfere with his readinefs to join every party;—his praife, his approbation, his good word are at every body's fervice,—and he is pleafed with every thing, from the drefs of the miftrefs of the houfe, to the decanters of wine that accompany the

deſſert. He plays equally well at *whiſt* or *cribbage*, *caſſino* or *beat the knave out of doors*; can accommodate himſelf with equal facility to the ſociety of men, women, or children; and is, in ſhort, one of the moſt univerſally uſeful, liked, and courted beings I know.

I need not expatiate on the worth and weight of the aſſiſtance I expect from him, but will proceed to aſſure my more ſerious readers that I am not unprovided with a friend in the metaphyſical and philoſophical line. I have an uncle, a Dignitary of the Church, who, having committed the care of his pariſhes to underlings, devotes himſelf to ſublime reſearches in thoſe difficult regions of ſcience. His walk is ſlow, and his gait ſolemn. He is frequently abſent, but this is a fault pardonable in ſo great a genius. His diſcoveries and reſearches into the ſecrets of nature are wonderful. He is, it is true, rather tenacious of his own opinions, and finds it difficult to maintain Chriſtian charity towards thoſe who differ from him; but when a man devotes a degree of attention to thoſe occult ſubjects, that very few perſons in this unreflecting age beſtow upon any thing but the purſuit of pleaſure, it is provoking to hear the ſublime truths ſo painfully diſcovered, treated with ridicule and mockery.

There is no topic on which this gentleman is at a loſs—nothing which does not afford room for metaphyſical diſquiſition; and even the remarks on dreſs which fall from the lips of ladies, have more than once given birth to a long harangue on the colour, brilliancy, and texture of thoſe habits in which the liberated immaterial ſoul is hereafter to be clothed. No natural phenomena can eſcape him, nor do any miracles appear miraculous to him. Thoſe relations which excite vulgar incredulity and deriſion, he can reduce to philoſophical principles, explain moſt rationally in the twinkling of an eye, and compel your belief by the force of his reaſoning.

I have, moreover, a nephew, who has juſt quitted a claſſical and commercial academy, who undertakes for the *politics* of my paper. The young gentleman tells me that his favourite ſtudy has been the connections and dependancies of States towards each other, and the true principles of government; that he is perſuaded he underſtands the ſubject thoroughly; and to convince me of it, he entered into a learned diſcuſſion of ſome late events, the whole of which diſcourſe I have requeſted him to commit to writing, that I may be enabled to preſent it to my readers.

Nor have I neglected those parts of morality and philosophy which come home to every one's bosom. My great aunt, Priscilla Barbara Saunter, deaf in her youth to the voice of Love, and finding in return Love deaf to her voice when she called upon him in her age, has erected a sort of court of cognizance of all daily offences. No one can be better qualified for judging of the conduct of others, since it has been the chief exercise of her understanding for these last five-and-thirty years. Actions do not impose upon her by the speciousness of their appearance, nor by the goodness of their ostensible motives:—she has the true touchstone by which to discover ostentation under the mask of generosity—affectation in the garb of feeling—vanity in the likeness of ease and mirth—and impudence concealed under apparent gaiety of heart. She is sure to detect Lady Cogdie when she places the cards in her peculiar mode of shuffling; she sees when assignations are made by an expressive flirt of the fan; she can tell what husband is jealous without reason, and what spouse is secure where he ought to be alarmed; she dives into the very bottom of men's hearts, and fetches thence that truth which so usually conceals itself from every eye.—Let not, therefore, the world at large think to impose upon me: I am certainly inclined to be good-natured, and rather to think well than ill of my fellow-creatures; but Aunt Pris.

Pris. in her abundant love of truth, will undoubtedly turn sour this overflowing "milk of human kindness," and teach me to view every thing in its true and detestable colours—she will enable me to find yahoos where I now see men, and great will be the benefit hence accruing to my readers.

But, that the ladies may not think themselves utterly neglected, let me hasten to inform them that the fair Belvidera Dulcibella Saunter, after having waited in vain till the age of twenty-five, in hopes that her charms and her merits would open the eyes of some man to a diamond so neglected, has now devoted herself to their service. A perfect adept in the science of Romance, she has written several Novels, in which every shade of that meretricious passion, dignified by the name of love, has been most accurately marked. She is able to distinguish the precise moment when careless flirting becomes a meaning coquetry—when the roving glances of a beauty's eye are arrested by some corresponding glance in the man whom she is thenceforth to love! She knows all the symptoms of the passion, and judges most accurately of its strength and stability by the faintest blush that adorns the cheek of Beauty, or the slightest sigh that heaves a gentle bosom.

 I hope

I hope I have now acquitted myſelf of the charge of vanity or inconſiſtency to the ſatisfaction of all my readers. No one can apprehend that, with ſuch multifarious and excellent coadjutors, my paper can ever grow ſtupid from the want of variety; moreover, I invite the contributions of correſpondents, whoſe favours ſhall be accepted when I think them worthy.

That I may not appear to have been driven to this deſcription of my aſſiſtants by any motive but the generoſity and honeſty of my own heart, I ſhall not tell *Inquiſitorius* whether his letter has been received, nor ſhall I acknowledge the heavy charge of vanity brought againſt me by an *Anonymous Correſpondent*; but I will lay before the Public a letter I have received, and dare to acknowledge, confeſſing that I am unwilling to mutilate the expreſſions, much as the praiſes it contains wound my delicacy.

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

"Dear Sir,

"Nothing has, for a long time, given me half the pleaſure that the appearance of your firſt Number did. You deſcribe yourſelf as the very

very person calculated to amuse, to inform, and to delight the world. Oh Sir! acquainted as you are with fashionable life, what delicious anecdotes may we not expect! For my part, I am determined not only to take in your paper myself, but to promote its circulation among all my acquaintance. I intend to be your frequent correspondent; and as I visit all public places, routs, balls, and masquerades, I shall be very useful, I doubt not. Dear creature! I will love you for ever, if you will publish some private anecdotes I will send you of Lady Fanny Flutter——the creature positively wears a wig!

"Your's ever,

"DEBORAH WATCHFUL."

Honoured as I am by this first letter from a fair correspondent, I fear I shall be obliged to relinquish that eternal love which is to be purchased by the publication of private anecdotes. My aunt, Priscilla Barbara, and my cousin, Billy Whiffle, look upon that as their peculiar province, and would withdraw their assistance from me if I were to accept the promised communications of my friend Deborah. One more letter I must lay before the Public; they will not now accuse me of sacrificing to vanity.

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"'Pon honour, friend Saunter, thou'rt a strange being with thy affectation of wit, humour, and sarcasm; but it won't do—it won't do, take my word for it! Thy plan is now trite and stale; the world won't thank thee for thy animadversions; no one will give thee credit for such superiority of intellect as shall entitle thee to satirize thy betters; and thou wilt find thy musty papers employed to wrap up halfpennyworths of tobacco at a chandler's shop. For my part, I and a set of bucks of my acquaintance have agreed to send thee to Coventry, and to quiz every one that can be convicted of reading thee: so take my advice, leave off in time; or if thou wilt write, write only from Newmarket.

"Thine, as thou treatest me,

"Dick Dashall."

No.

No. III.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1799.

MORALISTS, and writers of all kinds, have in all ages lamented the perversion of the many benefits and blessings enjoyed by mankind, to ends diametrically opposite to the original intention of them. The abuse of time, of money, of ability, have so often employed abler pens than mine, that I will not attempt to revive subjects which have already been so amply discussed; but there are some smaller abuses which may fall under the cognizance of such a petty censor as myself, without infringing on the rules and purlieus of greater philosophers.

The power of speech was certainly intended to enable us to convey to each other the precise ideas that arise in our minds; but it unfortunately happens

pens that, there being no poſitive criterion by which to judge of the ſpecific meaning of words, they do oftentimes bear a very different interpretation from that which obviouſly preſents itſelf to the ſpeaker; nay, the explanation of words differs materially in different places, ſo that a phraſe may be underſtood in one ſenſe in one part of the kingdom, or even in one part of this extenſive town, and in quite an oppoſite one, at another.

To bring a familiar and frequent inſtance of this, where ſhall we find a certain ſtandard for the meaning of the word *great?* A great man at 'Change differs as materially from a great man at Court, as the great lady of an obſcure village does from the great arbitreſs of faſhion in the metropolis. There are great men in every line. Tim Stay-tape, the tailor, ſpeaks of his predeceſſor Cabbage as a very great man, becauſe he invented the ſtraight jockey coat, and cloſe buttoning-up cape; while Monſieur Pantin, the French dancing-maſter, bows to the greatneſs of his countryman, who rivalled a gooſe in ſtanding on one leg. Now, indeed, the French ſeem to have invented another ſtandard for greatneſs, and look on thoſe only as deſerving the appellation, who can execute the wild imaginations which the German Poets make themſelves great by inventing. Formerly, he only was great who did ſome mighty miſchief,

miſchief, or ſome important ſervice to mankind. The lawgiver who humanized nations, and the conqueror who deſolated them, were the chief competitors for ſo noble a title; though the inſpired geniuſſes who ſung their praiſes, enjoyed no niggardly ſhare of the greatneſs they ſo amply contributed to beſtow. Now, indeed, men attain to greatneſs by more compendious methods. A King's Patent formerly could only beſtow nobility---it can now confer greatneſs; and, from the patent warming-machine, to him who undertakes to cure every ſpecies of diſeaſe by Royal Authority, every man becomes great who can obtain ſuch indiſputable credentials. Perhaps it might be worth the while of ſome ſerious moraliſt to enquire whether any thing can really be great which hath not for its aim ſome object equal to the whole conception of the human mind; and perhaps this, my light ſpeculation, may give birth to ſome moſt learned and profound diſquiſition on the ſubject. I can even fancy ſome future Plato thus lecturing his diſciples on the topic I have here ſtarted:——

"It were in vain to purſue greatneſs through all the imaginary forms it takes in the wild opinions of men. I will content myſelf with examining a few of the moſt obvious ones.

"The firſt which naturally preſents itſelf, is the

the grand display of human greatness in the conduct of States, and the government of Empires. Empires are indeed mighty machines; [illegible] steam-engine, whose powers are so immense as to be deemed incalculable, is set in motion by a very small proportion of fire, so the wheels of the State are moved by powers most inadequately mean. Instead of that grand and general principle of universal benevolence and disinterested patriotism, which ought to actuate those who wield the helm of empire, we see personal interest opposed to public welfare—private pique outweighing national advantage—corruption forming the basis of those rewards which ought to be bestowed on merit—and influence obtaining those posts which should be given to those best qualified to fill them.

"To descend a step lower, and enquire into the greatness of military operations. Inspect their *minutiæ*, and you will find them most trifling. The good order and discipline of an army seem to depend on the regularity with which a certain number of men move their limbs together—on the exactness with which they clean and polish their arms, and preserve their coats from blemish; instead of that bold and irresistible courage which prompts them to fall with united force on the enemy. An army of modern times moves with

as

as much regularity as a troop of females in the night-dance at Otaheite. Inſtead of the warm and animating harangue of the General, inciting the men to act with courage, and rouſing every noble energy of their minds, by repreſenting to them the goodneſs of the cauſe for which they fight, and the value of the pledge that is at ſtake,—our automaton troops are put in motion by a word of command often unintelligible even to the initiated, and to others totally void of meaning.

"Enquire of literature for greatneſs. You will find a ſwelling bombaſt, not ſo much of ſtyle as of ſentiment, ſubſtituted for the true ſublime; horror heaped on horror, and extravagance on extravagance, till the Muſe, diſdaining the already-trodden path to fame, "outherods Herod."

"Shall we not then conclude that, ſince, in theſe enlightened times, thoſe purſuits, which ſeem moſt great, do deſcend to ſuch trivial littleneſſes, and totally fail in attaining greatneſs, the cauſe muſt lie in the purſuits themſelves, and not in the ſteps taken by thoſe very beings who have ſhewn themſelves capable of ſuch deep reſearch, and of ſuch indefatigable ingenuity in diſcovering ways ſo minute? Shall we not then turn that reſearch and that ingenuity to a more profitable purpoſe, and rather enquire what is truly

great, than endeavour to find out any better means for obtaining Greatneſs in thoſe paths which, we have every reaſon to believe, do not lead to her abode?

"The human ſoul, formed for progreſſive improvement, can be ill-ſatisfied with any thing of which ſhe perceives the boundary:—even Alexander wept that he had no more worlds to conquer. Yet we were not placed in this world without an adequate purſuit. The common occupations of rational beings are by no means ſufficient to ſatisfy the expanſive powers of the human mind. Even thoſe objects which at a diſtance appear ſtupendous, become inſignificant and trifling, when we contemplate the *minutiæ* of which they are compoſed; as the magnificent monuments of architecture are completed by innumerable ſtrokes of the chiſel and the hammer.

"The firſt conceptions of noble performances which ariſe in the mind, are undoubtedly grand. The myſtery of politics, the ſcience of war, the enthuſiaſm of literature, and even the bold and maſterly inventions of art, are, in idea, objects worthy even of the perpetually unfolding mind of man; but in the execution of theſe ſo many meanneſſes and littleneſſes ariſe to diſguſt and ſicken, that we cannot pronounce them ſufficiently grand

grand for the purſuit of a being of ſuch infinite capacity.

"The only true greatneſs is preciſely the reverſe of theſe ſubjects we have been conſidering. Theſe are all, in their firſt conceptions, grand; but as we proceed, they become momentarily more and more trifling, till the diſenchanted mind wonders how it could have been miſled by ſo vague and inadequate an idea. That greatneſs which alone can ſatisfy the mind of man, inſtead of beginning at the baſe of the pyramid, and loſing itſelf gradually in an imperceptible point, is rather like the ſolid arch which, taking its ſpring from a comparatively ſmall foundation, embraces a large ſpace, and becomes proportionably ſtronger, more firm, and more majeſtic as it advances.

"Perhaps there is only one object, of which human beings have any notion, which bears the leaſt reſemblance to this idea. The endeavour of the ſoul after immortality is alone thus progreſſive, noble, and ſatisfactory. Beginning by rooting out the ſmalleſt failings, and cultivating the germ of virtue, it expands as it advances, till the firm arch of perfection embraces every poſſible good quality, and becomes hourly more concentrated, more immoveable, more ſtupendous. Employed in purſuit of this object, trifles

trifles are no longer mean; they are ennobled by their end, if indeed they are not in themselves noble. The other occupations, inseparable from our present situation, receive a tincture of the sublime from the great aim of our lives. The science of politics becomes grounded on a benevolent philanthropy, and a principle of extensive justice. Nothing is admitted into the heart of him who considers eternity as the goal of all his labours, but what tends to render his fellow-creatures, as well as himself, wiser, better, and happier, and thus employed——"

"Thus employed!—Good Mr. Solomon Saunter, you forget yourself in the assumed character of some future Plato. Whither has your enthusiasm transported you,—and what is it that has set your spider imagination to weave this extensive web of declamation? Was it not—for shame to forget thus the original subject of your pen!—was it not the letter which now lies open on your desk? Transcribe it instantly, and leave such high-flown morality to any future Plato that may chuse to adopt so obsolete a style; but do you, good Mr. Solomon, be wise enough to adapt your lucubrations to the character of the times."

I stand corrected. I confess my fault, and without further offence, will transcribe the letter which

which gave birth to the idea that, like a grain of gold, has beat out to ſuch an incalculable extent; only premiſing that my correſpondent ſeems laudably ambitious to deſerve the epithet which he has added to his name.

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"Venerable Sir,

"Having always been deſirous of exalting myſelf above the common drudges of the world, who ſtrut their little hour upon the ſtage, and drop off obſcure and forgotten, I have bent the whole force of my mind towards accompliſhing one grand object, by which I hope to immortalize my name, and to deſerve, even if I do not obtain, the thanks of my cotemporaries. But you, moſt learned Sir, well know that the great Milton reaped not the harveſt of glory during his lifetime; it was not till after the inexorable hand of Death had for ever cloſed his ears to the ſoothing voice of praiſe, that the merits of his renowned work were allowed by his countrymen. Yet ſuch an example as his does not deter me from following the glorious path of induſtry

and energy: I content myself with saying, like Portius,

> "'Tis not in mortals to command succefs,
> "But we'll do more, Sempronius—we'll deferve it."

"I am convinced, Sir, that this quotation has been rather hacknied; but why fhould we refufe that which is applicable, merely becaufe others have applied it before us? For my part, I own I confider it as a very blameable vanity to infift on treading wholly in new paths. It is not every man who has genius to ftrike out novelty and invention; but almoft every man, by patient induftry and perfevering diligence, may improve on the models already before him, and add, perhaps, no inconfiderable advantage to the refearches of fcience, or the performances of art. Doubtful of my own abilities to foar in the higher regions of invention, I have confined my efforts to the improvement of an article ready invented to my hands; but by the ftrength and ingenuity I have difcovered in my own mind during the progrefs of this work, I doubt not but that in about double the fame fpace of time, I could have produced a novelty of equal merit. I am, however, unwilling that the labours of five years fhould be loft, and therefore requeft of you to communicate to the world at large the fuccefs of my attempts.

"I have

" I have long obferved, with commiferation and regret, the liftlefs vacancy that obtrudes itfelf on our perfons of fafhion for want of a general occupation at once eafy, elegant, playful, and interefting. The ladies indeed have lately endeavoured to remedy this misfortune by applying themfelves, with the utmoft affiduity to netting; but, unhappily, this refource is of no ufe to the gentlemen, who perhaps feel more ftrongly the mifery of unoccupied leifure from the contraft exhibited by their fair companions. The cup and ball, the te-totum, and, above all, the bandalore, or vandalore, (for I am not quite clear as to the proper etymology of the word, nor can I find any antiquarian who can decide on the right of the two contending letters) for a while in their turns relieved this *tædium vitæ*; but, like many other ingenious inventions, they have fallen into decay, for want of exciting fufficient intereft.

" The latter article, as the moft novel, graceful, and amufing, I have chofen for the exercife of my ingenuity; and I have invented fuch wonderful improvements upon it, as will, I truft, fecure its future immortality. I have contrived a particular mode of throwing it, which will anfwer the whole purpofe of an univerfal language; and it will be, at leaft, as intelligible as the cant of our modern fafhionifts. Each toy will be accommodated with a certain

numb[illegible] ftrings, of different colours, to be in-ferted [illegible] moment, and which will be expreffive of different tempers, characters, and inclinations. In the bandalore itfelf I have imagined confiderable improvements; but I fhould be forry to detail them more at large, left fome plagiarift fhould run away with my idea, and fanctify the robbery by a Patent.

"I intend fhortly to open a warehoufe in the moft fafhionable part of the town, where I fhall attend myfelf to accommodate my cuftomers with bandalores adapted to their phyfiognomies, ages, and characters; and I propofe to have a private room, where I fhall, at ftated times, give lectures to thofe who wifh to be fully inftructed in the ufe of this moft expreffive toy.

"I fhould think, worthy and learned Sir, an occupation of this kind might well fill up fome of your leifure hours; and if you will do me the favour to pay me a vifit, you fhall take your choice out of the many thoufands I have prepared to fatisfy the uncommon demand there will, no doubt, fpeedily be for this article. I fhall charge you only a guinea for the toy, and will give you the lecture *gratis*.

"I am, Sir,

"Your moft obedient, humble Servant,

"ROTUNDO MAGNUS."

No. IV.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1799.

THE art of compoſition and the ſtudy of language have been much more generally attended to lately, than they formerly uſed to be. The preciſion, perſpicuity, and nervous elegance which are required in the preſent age, were unknown to our predeceſſors in the regions of literature: and it is a curious ſpeculation to trace how much of philoſophy and metaphyſical reſearch depend on the ſpecific adoption of phraſes.

It has been often objected to the ſtudy of languages, that it is a ſearch after words rather than ideas; but words are ſimply the ſigns of ideas, and are, in fact, the only means by which their originals can be conveyed. When we perceive the uſe of

etymology in fixing the precise signification of words, we must allow that the study of various languages is not without its use; though we cannot deny that even in our own, accurately considered, there are yet many unexplored mines of wealth, that every day refine and harmonize the English tongue: this the numerous publications of the age sufficiently attest, very few of which are now deficient in those graces of style which formerly were very rarely to be met with.

The abstract science of universal grammar is perhaps, one of the most abstruse studies that can be pointed out. To reduce the principles of all languages to a few leading rules,—to point out wherein vernacular idioms differ, and wherein they agree,—to discriminate between the nice shades of almost synonymous expressions,—to lead the way to nervous precision, judicious arrangement, and all the various beauties of composition, demand a mind at once comprehensive and intelligent, an attention unwearied and acute, and a judgment well regulated and refined. Yet, when we observe the variety of opinions in the world on points which seem calculated to draw all thinking minds to one centre, we cannot help imagining such diversity to arise from a want of precision in terms, and to fancy that a perfect universal grammarian would be the best peace-maker in all the

the regions of philoſophy! Far then be it from the candid and liberal mind to deſpiſe the reſearches of the grammarian or the etymologiſt;—nor let the ſtill humbler critic, who confines himſelf to the ſimple inveſtigation of thoſe beauties, of which the more ſcientific philologiſts point out the cauſes, be thought to labour in an ungrateful ſoil. Every one who adds a portion, however ſmall, to the beauty of writing, adds, at leaſt, an equal quota to the allurements of literature; and he who developes the cauſes and principles of ſuch beauty, and enables others to detect the hidden, yet attractive charms of arrangement and compoſition, opens to thoſe who would, otherwiſe, be mere common readers, a new ſource of pleaſure and amuſement.

It has been remarked that the nearer a language approaches to perfection, the fewer perfectly ſynonymous terms it poſſeſſes. The refinement, which gradually improves every object, gives to every word a ſlight tinge of meaning, which its neareſt ſynonyme cannot ſupply;—and it is by attention to theſe delicate variations, that language has acquired the degree of refinement which at preſent adorns it: and of all the beauties which the delicacy (ſome call it faſtidiouſneſs) of the preſent age has taught us to admire, none can, perhaps,

more obviously tend to the real improvement of language than precision in terms.

It is always with something like disappointment and mortification that the thinking reader meets with ill-chosen words in writers otherwise elegant and correct; and there are few mistakes of the kind which strike with greater disgust, than where a term, which derives from a philosophical root, is applied in an improper manner. The word *palpable*, for instance, is often misused in lieu of *evident*, *apparent*, *&c.* and nothing can grate more harshly on the ear. It would be nearly as accurate to talk of hearing a smell, or smelling a sound, as to convey the idea of feeling (that is, touching) an appearance. *Palpable* so decidedly applies to those objects that are perceptible to the touch, that, when thus misused, it recals Mrs. Slipslop to the reader, or hearer's mind!

I mean not to remark on those colloquial barbarisms, which often disgrace the conversation of many persons who would write, at least, tolerable grammar; yet a very slight degree of attention might prevent such faults, without giving the least appearance of pedantry: but my present intention is to observe on a few of the leading features of written language, in order to enable some readers

to

to peruſe a well-compoſed book with greater reliſh, and ſome writers to pay attention to circumſtances which at preſent they diſregard as trivial.

There ought to be a general character of wholeneſs in every compoſition, to which all inferior parts ought to tend. Every ſpecies of writing has its peculiar and characteriſtic beauties, and it is neceſſary to avoid, as a fault, thoſe which belong to another claſs. The ſteady didactic ſtyle of argumentative writing is diſgraced, not adorned, by the brilliancy of imagination, or by the pathetic appeals to the feelings, which are of infinite advantage to ſome ſpecies of narrative. The page of Hiſtory requires a clear and luminous ſtyle, neither involved in intricacy, nor tricked out in metaphor. The ſtronger paſſions may be allowed to employ figurative language, becauſe the common tone of converſation is not ſufficiently energetic to diſplay their force;—but the true pathos is founded on ſimplicity. In this manner each ſtyle of writing has its own appropriate beauties, which ceaſe to be ſuch when forced into the ſervice of other branches; and many thoughts and expreſſions, in themſelves admirable, loſe all their merit, and even become faults, when placed where they have no right to be found.

There are, however, beauties which belong equally

equally to every ſtyle of writing, among which perſpicuity holds a diſtinguiſhed place. That book can never be well written which requires each page to be read over a *ſecond* time with additional care, and which yet leaves no impreſſion on the mind even after a *third* reading.—There may, indeed, be periods when the mind is leſs diſpoſed to receive the aliment offered to it;—but then, though it refuſes, it refuſes with caution and without diſguſt, which is not the caſe when the involutions of language cauſe the repetition. Perſpicuity relates both to arrangement and ſtyle, and in both conduces to imprint the ſubject on the mind, and to annex to it clearer and more luminous ideas. Perſpicuity of arrangement can rarely be obtained by a rapid writer, ſince it often requires the ſituation of whole paragraphs to be changed;—but then, when it has been ſufficiently attended to, every part of the work reflects luſtre on the reſt—the chain of reaſoning is clearly perceived, the ſcope of the ſubject readily retained, and the particular arguments impreſſively remembered. All theſe advantages are aſſiſted and embelliſhed when perſpicuity extends alſo to ſtyle, which demands a ſtrict attention to grammatical conſtruction, and the ſpecific meaning of words. To attain this diſtinguiſhed perſpicuity, it is not only neceſſary that the common rules of grammar ſhould not be violated, nor the principles of

ſyntax

syntax disregarded; but that all the niceties of construction should be punctiliously attended to, as they conduce even more to perspicuity than they do to elegance.

Among the most common and most unobserved faults, though it be one which greatly involves the meaning of all writers, is the mistaking the active and the passive states both in nouns and verbs, and the mingling of the two in the different members of a sentence. Not to go far for an example, the word *perspicuity* is not unfrequently confounded with *perspicacity*; the former being the passive, the latter the active noun. We meet with too numerous examples of mingling passive and active construction in the different members of a sentence in the very best of our English writers; and I dare say some instances of the kind might be selected from the works of Solomon Saunter, Esq. But it would lead me beyond my limits were I to enter critically on the subject, and produce vouchers for all that I advance. I mean merely to offer some lights to those who wish to investigate the subject more curiously.

Another beauty which may be universally adopted, is the use of nervous or energetic expressions;—the figure *Metonymy*, judiciously applied, is of great service in this respect. No

deſcription is pointed that is wholly expreſſed in general terms; a few lively and well-choſen particulars give force to the whole, and impreſs the mind with ſtronger ideas. Deſcription, however, ought, by no means, to run out into a verboſe detail of minute particulars: a few leading ones convey much more meaning.

To compreſs the moſt forcible ideas into the ſmalleſt compaſs, muſt ever be the firſt beauty of writing:—yet, purſued too far, that brevity, which is the greateſt cauſe of perſpicuity, will produce obſcurity. Diffuſeneſs of ſtyle muſt, however, always be weak, languid, and proſaïc: *proſaïc*, not in oppoſition to *poëtic*, but to that manly energy which good language demands whether in proſe or verſe. The judicious appropriation of epithets alſo confers much ſtrength on expreſſion. Never uſe two where one will ſuffice; for though the endeavour to diſcriminate between the moſt delicate ſhades of meaning is always laudable, yet by ſeeking to expreſs too accurately, elegance and ſtrength are ſacrificed at the altar of deſcription; as we often ſee the half-finiſhed ſketch of a portrait promiſing the moſt perfect likeneſs, and loſing its expreſſion when more exquiſitely wrought by the laborious pencil.

Narrative ſhould always be as conciſe as is conſiſtent with clearneſs, where it is introduced as an illuſtration of any opinion. Where it is the principal buſineſs, it will allow of a little more diffuſion; but many works would gain more in ſtrength than they would loſe in ſize, by being compreſſed into a much ſmaller compaſs.

The worth of expreſſion muſt, after all, be eſtimated by the quantum of thought which it conveys. Many writers have a great facility of expreſſion, and yet make no permanent impreſſion on their readers. This is very frequently the caſe in poetry, more ſo, perhaps, than in proſe; and it muſt be confeſſed that, though the ſterling weight of thought will ſometimes excuſe infelicity of expreſſion in proſe, yet it is directly the reverſe in poetry, which often pleaſes from being happily worded, though from the paucity of idea it glides over the mind, nor leaves behind it the ſmalleſt trace. It is, however, neceſſary to good poetry, as well as to good proſe, that both merits ſhould be united;—that to ſtrength of meaning ſhould be added beauty of language, and felicity of expreſſion: and perhaps a better criterion of the merits of writing can ſcarcely be found, than the traces it leaves on the memory of an intelligent reader. The remembrance of a work will be clear or confuſed, in proportion as the work itſelf had a claim

claim to either character; and yet it is obſervable that the reader of reflection had rather, at ſome diſtance of time, reperuſe the work he remembers beſt, than that of which he has a ſlighter recollection. I am, however, in this inſtance, alluding to books of argument or ſcience, of which the remembrance and approbation will ever be in juſt proportion to their own perſpicuity, and the judicioufneſs of their arrangement.

In the ſentence juſt finiſhed, occurs an inſtance of conſtruction which I ſhould be puzzled to explain, but which ſhews, in part, what I mean with reſpect to the juſt agreement between the two members of a ſentence. I had written "in juſt proportion to their own perſpicuity and judicious arrangement;"—but in this conſtruction, which can hardly be called *faulty*, I was ſtruck with what appeared to me an incongruity, and altered the ſentence as it now ſtands. I know not whether this will be deemed too faſtidious, but at leaſt it ſerves to illuſtrate the opinion advanced above.

That more of the pleaſure of reading depends on language than is generally imagined, I am perfectly convinced. I would therefore adviſe all thoſe, who wiſh to be noticed among the *literati* of the age, to pay particular attention to the terms of their expreſſions, and the conſtruction of their

phraſes.

phrases. It is by no means necessary to the beauty of writing that every period should be turned with the ponderous rotundity of Johnson's language; nor indeed is any peculiar manner necessary to produce the effect proposed: the language ought to vary with the subject, to be appropriate to it, and not to wear the same uniform character, whether it be employed on serious or jocular subjects, on topics of feeling, or those of science and argument.

Voltaire, who wished to be thought an universal genius, as he attempted every kind of writing, is completely a mannerist; and every one of his works, be it grave or gay, historical, ironical, argumentative, or poetical, bears what is expressively called, "*Le Sçeau de Voltaire.*" Voltaire (I speak from a cursory perusal of his works) had, perhaps, a genius, as it is called, only for irony: this talent he possessed in the strongest degree; but Voltaire must not rest his future fame on any other of the numerous qualifications he laid claim to. As a poet, perhaps the genius of his language, rather than any deficiency in himself, prevented him from rising above mere mediocrity! But as an historian, a philosopher, and, above all, a philologist, I fear his claims to universal genius are very ill founded.

I am,

I am, however, rather wandering from my ſubject, which was rather language in general, and the art of compoſition, than any individual criticiſm. As I have thus loſt the thread of my diſcourſe, perhaps I ſhall be pardoned for inſerting a Hymn, compoſed on the ſea-ſhore during a violent gale of wind.

HYMN.

Divine Creator! as my footſteps roam
  Along the trackleſs margin of the ſea,
The mighty world of waters as they foam,
  Lift high my aſtoniſh'd ſoul to Heaven and Thee!

Who, that beholds th' impetuous billows pour
  Far o'er th' accuſtom'd limits of the main,
But muſt Thy ſtrong, o'er-ruling power adore,
  Whoſe awful fiat can their rage reſtrain!

Reſiſtleſs, urging on their wild career,
  The boiling waves affright the watchful eye:
The ſhelving ſands oppoſe a ſlight barrier,
  But Ocean hears Thy voice!—and paſſes by!

What

What power but Thine, Almighty! thus could guide
 The wintry tempests, furious as they blow?
What hand but Thine arrest the hurrying tide,
 And teach the restless waters where to flow?

What skill, Eternal Architect, but Thine,
 Could fix the boundary of the headlong surge?
Or trace th' unseen, irremeable line
 That checks destruction on the dangerous verge?

But for Thy potent word, th' opposing shore,
 A victim to th' o'erwhelming waves would fall,
The rooted rock stem the rough tides no more,
 But universal ruin cover all!

No. V.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1799.

WHEN I was in Wales laſt ſummer, I was very much ſtruck with the ſituation of a little village on my road; and as my plan in travelling is always to adopt whatever idea promiſes amuſement, I determined, as I alighted in the yard of the inn, to remain there a few days, if I could find tolerable accommodations. The inn, however, was extremely wretched, and I wandered forth to ſee all that could be ſeen in the ſhorteſt poſſible ſpace of time; for I felt that it would be impracticable to remain there ſo long as I had at firſt intended. I aſcended a rugged hill to the eaſt of the village, and as from its ſummit I was admiring the proſpect, I perceived a Quaker, apparently engaged in the ſame amuſement.----" A very fine view from this hill," obſerved I.

"Very

"Very fine indeed," replied the Quaker;—"loveſt thou fine views?"

"So well," returned I, "that I would have ſtaid in this village for ſome days to have indulged the propenſity, but that the inn affords no accommodations at all."

I need not, however, purſue the converſation, which laſted during a long walk, at the end of which, my friendly Quaker invited me to remain at his houſe till I had ſufficiently feaſted my eyes. I accepted the invitation, and eſtabliſhed myſelf there that very evening. I ſtaid there five or ſix days, in the courſe of which time ſomething like a friendſhip took place between the Quaker and myſelf, and even his pretty daughter Martha manifeſted no ſmall partiality for me. However, except an occaſional preſent now and then, to prove my gratitude, no intercourſe has ever taken place between us, until the poſt, the other day, brought me a letter in a hand I was wholly unacquainted with. I opened it haſtily, and found it as follows.

"Eſteemed Friend,

"Thou wilt perhaps be ſurpriſed at receiving a letter from me—nay, perhaps, thou wilt

wilt have forgotten the exiſtence of Abraham Upright;—however, neither I nor my daughter Martha have forgotten thee, but have continued to wiſh thee all welfare and happineſs every day of our lives.

"If thou haſt not forgotten us, perhaps thou rememboreſt the young man named Philip Dellwyn. The young man was ſick thou knoweſt:—he now ſleeps with his fathers. I one day ſurpriſed my daughter Martha in the room where he dwelt, in tears over a roll of paper, which I ſoon ſaw was in his hand-writing. Had there been a fire at hand, I ſhould have toſſed the papers into it in a moment; as there was none, I contented myſelf with taking them from Martha, and locking them up in my bureau. There they have lain ever ſince, until the other day, hearing talk made of thy work, my daughter reminded me of theſe papers, and adviſed me to ſend them to thee. I have followed her advice, and this night thou wilt receive by the waggon the whole roll, to do therewith as pleaſeth thee. Martha ſendeth her beſt wiſhes to her old friend, as doth alſo,

"Eſteemed Friend,

"Thy ſincere friend and well-wiſher,

"ABRAHAM UPRIGHT."

I had

I had certainly not forgotten either Abraham or his fair daughter; much lefs had I forgotten Philip Dellwyn, who joined to a look of fragile health, a countenance fo pale, a form fo flight, and yet eyes fo refplendent with fenfe and fenfibility, that it was evident a figure fo ethereal, could not be long for this world. I found my worthy friend, Abraham Upright, had given him fhelter for the fake of his health, for he was trying pure air, and goat's-milk whey; and had never demanded the ftipulated rent, becaufe he remarked the unrenewed fhabbinefs of his lodger's threadbare coat. I had endeavoured to obtain fome knowledge of the young man's fate, but could only learn it had not been happy; and I felt myfelf unequal to relieve any actual diftrefs:—but his demeanour fo gentle, fo placid, fo penfive, interefted my heart extremely, and not lefs the heart of the pretty Martha. Poor Dellwyn would look at her, when the uncontrouled emanations of her countenance almoft betrayed her fecret, with looks animated by the pureft delight: then fuddenly, as fome remembered trouble fhot acrofs his heart, he would withdraw his eyes from her lovely countenance, and caft them from heaven to earth with a look fo mildly refigned, fo contentedly penfive, that it was impoffible to notice it unmoved.

Poor little Martha confeffed to me one day, that

that ſhe thought Philip Dellwyn the moſt amiable man ſhe knew—ſhe wiſhed he was but a *friend.* I could not help hoping that ſome unforeſeen events would at laſt bring ſo innocent a love to a happy iſſue;—but, alas! it was brought very rapidly to a period after I had left Wales. Poor Dellwyn! many a ſigh has the recollection of thy dejected countenance coſt me—many a tear will the termination of thy blameleſs life occaſion me!

I looked into the packet ſent me by my friend Abraham, with a ſort of tender melancholy, which its contents ſerved to heighten. The firſt paper I unfolded was a little hiſtory of himſelf, which intereſted me the moſt, and which I therefore firſt preſent to my readers, without further ceremony. It has neither regular beginning nor end, and the firſt and ſome intermediate leaves appear to be wanting;—perhaps, the pretty Martha may have preſerved them as a relique;—however, the tale is ſufficiently intelligible.

'And am I never to know the truth?' ſaid I.

'What good would the truth do you?' replied he, with an air but ill calculated to repreſs my ardent curioſity. 'While you contentedly remain in ignorance,' added he, after a pauſe,

'you

'you will be ſheltered and ſupported; but if you perſiſt in your enquiry, you will be obliged to ſeek your bread with toil and labour.'

"For ſome time longer theſe anſwers contented me. I was purſuing with ardour an education which I thought preferable even to independence; and though the manners of my guardian were not much calculated to conciliate eſteem, thoſe of his ſiſter had won my warmeſt affection. Gentle, careſſing, and indulgent, a word from her had more power over my mind than the ſtricteſt command from my preceptor; and when I have been ſtubborn and ſullen under puniſhment from him, a look from Miſs Goldney has ſubdued my proud heart, and melted the obſtinacy of my reſolution into tears of penitence. To her I was indebted for every indulgence I obtained—her kindneſs ſweetened to me hours rendered intolerable by the harſh ſeverity of Mr. Goldney; a ſeverity, which would have exaſperated me to ſeek my liberty at once, but for the advantage of the knowledge I was acquiring:—and Miſs Goldney ſo forcibly pointed out to me the value of this circumſtance, and the influence it would have on my future life, that I was contented to abide ſtripes and ill treatment, rather than forego the completion of an education which was to ſoften a ſavage into man.

"That part of it, however, which Miſs Goldney conducted, was preciſely that which was deareſt to me, and that which has moſt influenced me through the ſhort and wretched remainder of my life. Full of the moſt noble ſentiments, and the tendereſt ſenſibility, Miſs Goldney, with delight, cultivated in me diſpoſitions which ought to have been repreſſed, but which are too faſcinating not to throw a veil over the dangers they create. Alive to every virtuous feeling—indignant at vice, oppreſſion, and tyranny, ſhe ſaw with delight the tremulous fibres of my ſoul vibrate to the ſlighteſt touch;—ſhe ſaw the fire, the enthuſiaſm, that animated my eye—the ſtrong reſolution that aroſe in my boſom never to ſubmit to oppreſſion. She ſtrengthened theſe diſpoſitions—ſhe rendered me moſt ſenſibly awake to the voice of affection—that harmonious voice I was deſtined to hear no more! She foreſaw not my future ſituation, or ſhe would have ſtriven to render my heart callous to injuſtice, my ſpirit ſubſervient to oppreſſion, my manners ſervile, and my principles obedient.

"What had I,—the outcaſt of ſociety,—the poor rightleſs dependant on the caprice of others,—what had I to do with high feeling, conſcious worth, the ſenſe of exalted generoſity, or the haughty indignation of innocence againſt oppreſſion.—Ah, dear and amiable Miſs Goldney, when I ſhed

I fhed thofe bitter tears over your untimely grave, when I refufed comfort, when I fhunned fociety, and abandoned myfelf to a defpair that was imputed to me as a crime, I doubtlefs forefaw that I was to hear no more the foothing tones of kindnefs—that I was no more to experience the bleffing of a friend!

"How can I bear to dwell on the melancholy fcene of her illnefs; and yet, in my hours of mifery, I love to recal her patient and dignified fuffering—the refignation with which fhe awaited the ftroke which was to releafe her from a painful difeafe, and a world, in which, for my fake alone, fhe wifhed to continue.

'Philip,' faid fhe to me one day, while I fat befide her, 'I look forward with anxiety to your fate. Your ardent, impetuous temper, when I am no longer at hand to reftrain it—your gloomy firmnefs, when the voice of kindnefs fhall no longer attempt to foften it, will expofe you to ferious calamity! Philip Dellwyn, when injuftice roufes you, when caprice defpifes you, when meannefs injures, or when tyranny oppreffes you, think of me:—Oh then be gentle, be patient!—Your fituation, my dear boy, will not admit of thofe high-fpirited virtues which yet, I truft, will, one day or other, when all your difficulties fhall be furmounted,

ſurmounted, render you reſpectable and happy, the exalted, the dignified being I wiſh to ſee you;—but remember, Dellwyn, through patient ſuffering lies the road to peace.'

"Her words were ſurely prophetic.—I promiſed to remember her; alas! could I ever forget the ſweet monitreſs of my early days, whoſe ſmile had cheered me, and whoſe approbation had exalted me?

"I beſought her to tell me who I was. She refuſed; but was it in Miſs Goldney's power to preſerve a ſilence which ſhe felt it was injurious to keep? I entreated, I reaſoned:—her ſteadineſs tottered, the ſecret trembled on her lips, and a few minutes would have put me in poſſeſſion of a truth which ſhe would have ſoftened to me, when Mr. Goldney entered. She was worſe in the night, and the next day — — — — — —

"Mr. Goldney now kept no terms with me; he ridiculed my ſorrow, and ſcoffed at my feelings: my anſwers he treated as the wild effuſions of enthuſiaſm, almoſt to madneſs; but the cautions of my loſt friend kept down the irritation of my temper. Mine was, however, naturally combuſtible: I was no longer a child. The knowledge Mr. Goldney had communicated, had enlarged

my underftanding ;—his mind was not to be enlarged even by learning: learning burdened his head and memory with much cumbrous pomp, but his heart could not open to wifdom. He continued to treat me with the fame intolerable farcafm; it feemed as if he ftrove to provoke the confequences. Long did I bear, without explofion, the irritating taunts of malice, the biting irony of fpleen, the mean allufions to a fecret he refufed to difclofe, the threats of low-minded oppreffion, and the ftings of unjuft opprobrium. At length I could bear thefe no longer; my fpirit revolted againft fuch palliating conduct as mean and fervile:—I retorted when next Goldney taunted me, and retorted with fuch keennefs, that I fhook his very foul. We knew no limits; I reproached him with his conduct in terms which took from him all felf-command: I acted on principle, and therefore poffeffed mine. I had argued with myfelf that, with a body ftrong, healthy, and active, with a mind well cultivated, and no rebellious will, I could not fail to fupport myfelf. I cared little, therefore, what confequences I provoked, and I forbore no reproach, no expreffion, that could fet before him, in its true light, the abominablenefs of his conduct. At length, he ordered me to quit his houfe, and to fee it no more.—'This conduct, young man,' faid he, 'abfolves me from all further care of you, and exonerates me and all concerned from any engagements.

engagements. Had you deferved it, the munificence of your father would have given you, at twenty-one, one thoufand pounds; now go forth, a high-fouled, pennilefs baftard!'

"I refufed to go till I knew the name of this munificent parent; but Goldney, well aware that his filence on this head would be a far greater punifhment than the poverty he had denounced againft me, refolutely maintained it, nor could all my exertions obtain the leaft information.

"Irritated and dejected, I went to weep over the grave of Mifs Goldney. I recalled her mild and complacent manners, her conciliatory advice, her patient fpirit; yet I reproached not myfelf. For her fake I had borne for months, treatment the moft injurious; to have fubmitted longer, had been to deferve it—had been to fhew a fpirit rather fervile than refigned, a fpirit even my patient monitrefs could never have approved:—but on her grave I wept fo long, that night found me ftill there. I had taken with me a fmall packet of linen, a book, the valued prefent of Mifs Goldney, and two guineas—all in the world I could call my own; for it appeared to have been Goldney's policy or orders to keep me wholly without property! I was, however, rich enough to pay for a fupper and a lodging, and walked away to a village a few miles diftant.

"The

"The night brought no ſleep to my eyes; the world was now before me. 'The moment,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'muſt have arrived, when I muſt have made choice of ſome mode of obtaining ſubſiſtence; it has advanced rather more rapidly, that is all.'

"At eighteen, with health, ſtrength, and talents, one does not readily deſpair.—'London,' thought I, 'is the great mart for talent:'—and to London I determined to go. The pen offered itſelf as the readieſt means of gaining bread, and I reſolved to write. Already had I laid the plan of my future labours, already had I turned ſome very eloquent periods, when I fell into a doze, from which I was awakened by the morning ſun. As I prepared for my journey, I felt the ſpirit of independence riſe within me: I took a haſty breakfaſt, and ſet forward on foot for London, exulting in the thought of the ſhame with which I ſhould ſo ſoon overwhelm Goldney. I felt invigorated with hope, and enlivened with the thought of depending only on myſelf. Full of delightful reveries, I forgot that I was a hundred and fifty miles from London, that I was unuſed to long journies, and unacquainted with the world:—alas! at eighteen, all difficulties fade before the conſcioufneſs of health, talents, and liberty."

No. VI.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1799.

FOR the amufement of this day, I propofe to give the continuation of the hiftory of Philip Dellwyn, premifing that I meet with many interruptions in the manufcript, which I am utterly unable to fupply:—to the imagination of my readers I muft leave them.

"Though far fhort of my deftined goal, and ftill further from that career of fame I had promifed myfelf, I was contented to remain where I was. My Lord was gracious and affable, and feemed to remember with gratitude the fervice I had done him. I yielded, therefore, to his wifhes, and confented to lead his two fons forward in the literary

literary paths I had already trodden. I reflected that while I dedicated my time and my talents to the advancement of t... human beings towards that perfection we ought a.. to aspire to, I was w..thily and usefully, if not brilliantly employed. The boys had genius and good temper; they attached th..selves to me, and I taught Greek and Latin *con amore*. I lost not sight, however, of the more splen... route I had marked out for myself, and frequently exercised my unfledged Muse in short poetic.. flights, more distinguished by exuberance than by genius. The Lady Matilda, only daughter of Lord Ernolf, was, however, pleased with my attempts, and was no niggard of her applause. To applause no poet ever yet was callous:—this is not the place to prove that he who could be so, would be incapable of being a poet; but to applause from a pair of brilliant black eyes, from a pair of smiling coral lips, from the exquisitely delicate voice of the Lady Matilda, it was still less possible to be insensible.

"The Lady Matilda was just at that touching age, when the vivacity of the child is softened by the delicacy of the woman. Unadulterat.. by art, unsophisticated by fashion, this lovely creature, with beauty enough to have ruined half the sex, had all the native innocence of an infant. Brought up wholly in the country, she thought not of

subordination

ſubordination of rank—an idea which the children of Nature could never adopt! a refinement, which thoſe beſt underſtand, who require the aid of extrinſic merit to entitle them to the reſpect they love.—Neither Matilda nor I thought about the matter: ſhe treated at firſt with diſtinction, and afterwards with kindneſs, the man who had ſaved her father; ſhe chatted with me as with a brother, and nothing can I recollect ſo delightful as her unguarded converſations. She was indeed ſecured from any improper attachment to me by a previous engagement with Lord Villars, a couſin of her's, ſanctioned by the parents on both ſides, and confirmed by a mutual preference.

"That I was not informed of this arrangement, reflects no blame on any one: it was, in the firſt place, moſt generally known throughout, not the family alone, but all their retainers and dependants; and, in the next place, Lord Ernolf was ſecured by the pledged affections of his daughter from any danger to her, and I was ſuppoſed too ſufficiently warned of the difference of our ranks, to allow me to raiſe the ſuperſtructure of Love on ſo ſandy a foundation. Be that as it will, the edifice was erected, and I even believe a little lurking hope formed a corner-ſtone of the foundation.

"When I learned of her pre-engagement, in the ſimpleſt

simplest manner imaginable, I own I felt plunged into an abyss of despair; but I continued for several months imbibing deeply the delicious poison of a first love, and it is on that intermediate portion of my life I best love to rest my mental eyes, from the fatigue of viewing the workings of tyranny, and the goadings of malice.

"In one of these conversations, I once let fall the name of Goldney. Matilda seemed to recognise it as familiar, and not as bringing with it a pleasing recollection. She asked me if I had ever known any body of that name. I replied with ardour, and the exuberance of my mind displayed itself alike in my vehemence against the brother, and my tender gratitude to the sister. Matilda confessed that in my portrait of Miss Goldney she saw a strong resemblance to the character of a lady, whom she remembered her mother pitying as unfortunate and ill-used; and some strange and bewildering ideas crossed my brain in consequence of what she further said. She recollected but little, for her mother had been dead some years, but she had sometimes accompanied her in her visits to this Miss Goldney, and the impression made on her young and affectionate mind by the kindness of the lady, had never been effaced. Something too, she retained, of Miss Goldney's living in absolute retirement, of the lowness of

her ſpirits, and the paleneſs of her cheeks: and to Matilda I now confided the thoughts which theſe recollections had given birth too.

"One while I was delighted with the poſſibility that the woman who had treated me with ſo much kindneſs, might be my mother; at another I felt it an incongruity to ſuppoſe that a truth of ſuch importance could, from any motives, have been, in ſuch circumſtances, concealed by a parent. Again, could I ſuſpect Miſs Goldney, whoſe life had been a model of purity and virtue, whoſe ſentiments had been noble and excellent, whoſe principles had been invariably juſt, and whoſe name even the lawleſs tongue of her brother had never dared to revile—could I ſuſpect her of having committed ſuch an impropriety, ſuch a crime? Yet, at times, my ingenious fancy formed a romance by which this might be reconciled. She might have been the victim of treachery and falſehood: there were men who would impoſe on women by pretended marriages, or who, having contracted ſuch as proved inimical to their future views, would boldly diſown the wretched woman whoſe hardineſs in the cauſe of innocence was leſs firm than their effrontery in ſupporting falſehood.

"In all theſe romances, the Lady Matilda was my confidante and aſſiſtant. We talked on the ſubject

ſubject till we doubted not that I ſhould make ſome great diſcovery that would reinſtate the injured fame of my mother, and reſtore me to my rights in ſociety. Alas! in theſe viſions of futurity glided away all the real happineſs deſtined ever to gild my life; and I buſied myſelf in forming chimeras never to be realized, while I ſuffered the actual felicity within my graſp to ſlip from me unobſerved and unenjoyed, in my viſionary eagerneſs after unknown events. But man is the creature of hope and expectation! The moſt delightful preſent is overlooked in anxious graſpings after future joy; but in return, the fairy promiſes of hope, by detaching the eye from the paſſing ſcene, alleviate the pang of actual miſery with the cheering view of bliſs hereafter to be enjoyed.

"It is by a wiſe diſpenſation of Providence that the human mind is ever unſatisfied with that which it poſſeſſes;—this "eager longing for futurity" is a proof that we are deſtined to a ſtate of more exalted bliſs than the preſent one, in which nothing can arreſt the fancy from its flights into the ideal world of unarrived events. Were it not thus, we ſhould ſee men more diſpoſed to profit by the reaſonings of philoſophers, and to attend to the paths they are actually confined to.

 "The

" The autumn was advancing fast; already the late leaves lingered on the trees, as if reluctant to lose their faint hold of life; already occasional storms of sleet and rain deformed the fair face of Nature, and debarred the Lady Matilda from her frequent wanderings, and Lord Ernolf talked of removing to London. Our conversations now ran on the new world I was about to be introduced to; and Matilda promised to herself a pleasing amusement in my astonishment at the vastness and ceaseless business of the metropolis.

' But fear not,' said she, ' my Henry will be your Cicerone, he will be your friend, and you, I am sure you will love my Henry!'

' And who,' exclaimed I, ' is Henry?'

' Good heavens!' returned Matilda, ' do you not know that I mean my cousin, Lord Villars, who is soon to be my husband?'

" How I looked, I know not, but Matilda sufficiently comprehended all that passed in my heart. After a few minutes' pause, she left me to solitude and reflection. What a night did I pass! but I was capable of forming my resolution. I appeared the next day thoughtful and pensive, but firm. I neither sought nor avoided Matilda: I had determined to suffer in silence, and she, who wished, as I flatter myself, to preserve for a friend, the man who

who had been so presumptuous as to think of loving her, assisted my endeavours by the continued mildness of her manners towards me. She affected not to have penetrated my secret, but retained, as much as possible, her former sweet and easy confidence.

"The short time that remained previous to our exchanging rural shades for dusty streets, was insufficient to bring me into a temper of mind fit to see and be introduced to Lord Villars; and I suffered more than language can describe, when an elegant young man, of a most prepossessing countenance, in the most graceful manner, thanked me for the service I had rendered his uncle, and bespoke my friendship in exchange for his own, adding, that his Matilda's account of me had disposed his heart to love me.

"Oh had I but known of her engagement! that certainly would have secured my young and innocent heart from feeling the fatal passion that will now quit it but with life! Nor will it be long that I shall continue to feel its torments. I am rapidly approaching the end of all my sorrows.—Every hour brings me sensibly nearer to that grave where alone this harassed heart can hope for rest. It was not in my nature to refuse the graceful offers of Lord Villars. I could not but confess

confeſs that he deſerved to poſſeſs Matilda, and I ſtrove to rejoice that ſhe was ſecured from ſharing the uncertain fortunes of ſuch an outcaſt as myſelf. But to live in the daily ſight of their affectionate intercourſe was too much for my feelings, and the agony of my ſoul firſt undermined that beſt portion of my hopeleſs youth, health and exertion.

"It was thought London did not agree with me; and Lord Ernolf, who would not have been ſorry to have detached his two ſons from pleaſures ſo enticing at their age, propoſed my returning with them to the country. But fate diſpoſed otherwiſe of me. I had been one morning out with Lord Villars, and ſtopped at his father's houſe in my way home, when, in the next room, I heard a voice which inſtantly chaſed the colour from my cheeks. Lord Villars ſaw me change countenance, and enquired the cauſe. I eagerly aſked who was in the next room.

'I believe,' ſaid Lord Villars careleſſly, 'there is nobody there but Goldney.'

'Goldney!' exclaimed I, 'I am then on the point of knowing all; Lord Villars, indulge me with ſeeing Mr. Goldney.'

"Lord Villars, aſtoniſhed at my too evident agitation, beſought me to compoſe myſelf: but while he

he was yet exhorting me to do so, Goldney departed. All composure vanished before this disappointment; and Lord Villars, terrified at the state I was in, enquired of the servants when Mr. Goldney was likely to return. They replied that he was going immediately into the country. With the zeal of a true friend, he ordered them to pursue and bring him back if possible, and I remained during their absence in a state of indescribable emotion.

"The effort was successful; they reached Goldney's inn just as he was going to mount his horse, and prevailed on him to return to the Earl's before his departure. Lord Villars had taken me into the apartment where his father sat.

"The old Earl of St. Albans, though too much of a courtier to behave with incivility to any one, had never appeared pleased with me. His conduct had been marked with a cold reserve, and yet a scrutinizing examination, neither of them pleasing to such a temper as mine. He now surveyed me with more attentive curiosity than ever, and attempted not to enter into conversation. Lord Villars, indeed, endeavoured to entertain me; but the Earl pretended to be engaged with a book, from which, however, I could perceive him perpetually raising his eyes, and fixing them on my face.

face. At length, a knock at the door gave me reaſon to expect the return of Mr. Goldney.

"It was he, but I took care to be ſtanding, ſo as that he ſhould not perceive me at his entrance.

'I returned inſtantly,' ſaid he, in a tone of ſervility, 'to receive your Lordſhip's further commands.'

"The Earl expreſſed his ſurpriſe, and I advanced immediately oppoſite to Goldney.

'They were my commands, Mr. Goldney,' ſaid I; 'I was unwilling to loſe this opportunity of thanking you for paſt favours.'

'I am happy to ſee you well, Mr. Dellwyn,' replied he; 'but it is rather inconvenient to me to be detained at preſent.'

'Stay, Sir,' ſaid I; 'will you favour me with your company in another room?'

"The Earl looked haughtily at me.—'Theſe are ſtrange liberties in my houſe, Mr. Dellwyn.'"

'I heartily beg your Lordſhip's pardon; but if you knew——Lord Villars, will you indulge me with the uſe of your apartment?'

"Lord Villars was kindly leading me thither. Goldney ſhewed great eagerneſs to be gone, and Lord

Lord St. Albans, in a ſtern voice, ſaid, 'This is a very ſingular ſcene; let it be terminated here!'

'With all my heart, my Lord,' replied I. 'Mr. Goldney, I wiſh to have a categorical anſwer—Who am I?—Who were my parents?—Why am I thus turned adrift on the wide world?'

"The Earl ſtarted up in aſtoniſhment.—'Frederick,' ſaid he to Lord Villars, who ſtood wondering in what this would end, 'you have encouraged this inſolence: leave the room!'

"Lord Villars obeyed the tyrannic mandate of his father, who now ordered me to proceed.

'Let Mr. Goldney anſwer thoſe queſtions,' ſaid I, 'and ſay why I have hitherto been denied the knowledge of my parents?'

'Is it your Lordſhip's pleaſure that I anſwer theſe queſtions?' demanded the fawning Goldney.

'I will anſwer them myſelf,' ſaid the Earl. 'I doubt not, young man, that this is a predetermined ſcheme to affront me; yet I cannot imagine, from the events that have taken place, that Mr. Goldney has betrayed his truſt. Your conduct, however, evidently proves that you deſerved not the intended bounty of your father. But go—you have no father! Return to your original nothingneſs; leave my houſe, and if you dare

dare to publiſh what you think you know, be aſſured no one will credit you.'

'I know nothing, my Lord,' ſaid I.

''Tis well then,' replied the Earl; 'on this head you ought to know nothing. Leave my houſe!'

'Mr. Goldney,' ſaid I, 'I require your company.'

'You will excuſe me, Mr. Dellwyn,' anſwered he; 'it is at preſent impoſſible.'

No. VII.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1799.

AS I hope my readers are extremely intereſted in the hiſtory of Philip Dellwyn, I ſhall reſume the narration immediately.

"It was impossible now to repose confidence in the bosom of Matilda. I had not courage to enter into an interesting conversation with a being too fatally dear to my heart; but even, could I in time have sought that resource, I was soon utterly deprived of it. The next day brought me a letter from Lord Villars.

'What can have incensed my father against you so cruelly, I cannot imagine; but trust me, 'dear Dellwyn, the heart of your friend will not 'change. Though I am at present forbidden all 'intercourse with you, depend upon the constant 'and unalterable friendship of

'Your truly attached

'VILLARS.'

"This heart-breaking blow was speedily followed by another. Lord Ernolf desired to speak with me. He began a long harangue, parading his gratitude, his esteem, his affection. I would have disclaimed his praises; they soon ended of themselves with a qualifying *but*——

'I was

'I was aware, he knew, of the intimate connection between his family and Lord St. Albans. I had offended the Earl; he could not imagine how a man of my gentle manners could have given so irreparable an offence; but in short—'

'In short, my Lord,' replied I, 'the Earl requires you to dismiss me: he has made a similar request to his son:—the Earl is extremely obliging; he is determined to teach me to feel the natural independency of man. My Lord, our obligations have been mutual. If I had the good fortune to render you a piece of service, you have, in return, treated me with delicacy and kindness; nay, my obligations to you are of a superior kind: your Lordship will accept my best thanks,—you will allow me to bid your sons adieu.'

'Nay, go not so, Mr. Dellwyn; let me give you some more substantial mark of my gratitude.'

'Pardon me, my Lord, there is no contract between us. I return to the world richer than when I entered your Lordship's mansion: I have acquired more knowledge of man!'

"Again Lord Ernolf would have pressed some pecuniary reward upon me; but I spurned the idea of receiving assistance from a being who could so far adopt the prejudices of another, as to abandon a man from whom he had received an important personal service, and who had under-

 taken

taken for him the dignified task of leading the mind of youth through the toilsome paths of learning and virtue. Lord Ernolf was offended at my resolution: he called it pride, and left me with less complacency in his manner than when he first addressed me.

"My farewel to the two boys was short, but friendly; they loved and respected their tutor, and the principles he taught them will never disgrace either themselves or him. I wished to have avoided the saying "adieu!" to the Lady Matilda; but she sought me. She spoke in the voice of the tenderest friendship; she entreated me to let her know what became of me; she referred me to the stability of her Henry's friendship, to my own merits, and to the power of time for raising me to happiness. I thanked her for her consolations, affected to believe them sufficient, and departed.

"I felt that, if I could depend on Lord Villars's friendship, he was at least too much under the controul of a domineering father to have it in his power to serve me. My merits, I found, were insufficient to support me against calumny and unfounded enmity; and time——yes, I felt already that a very short time would indeed put an end to my sorrows. I was now, with respect to my future

future proſpects, preciſely in the ſituation I was on quitting Goldney's houſe. I had ſtill my pen to depend on, and I had improved my ſtock of experience; but other circumſtances caſt a ſhade over every effort: health was hourly eluding my graſp, nor had the fatal paſſion for Matilda undermined that alone—it had alſo robbed me of the power of exertion. Yet that ardent paſſion preſerved me from ever committing a mean or a vicious action; it ennobled all my views, and rectified my notions. Of the enmity of Lord St. Albans, I thought little—that of Lord Ernolf was deſpicable! I now lived for myſelf alone! It was neceſſary to exert myſelf, and my pen at times gained me a decent ſubſiſtence; but this ſubſiſtence was precarious, and I was ſometimes in a ſtate almoſt amounting to ſtarving!

"I diſdained, however, to let either Lord Villars or the Lady Matilda know where I had hidden my wretched head; but I found all my fond dreams of fame and grandeur gradually fade away, and I could not help wiſhing, at ſome impious moments, to exchange ſituations with any poor mechanic, whoſe labour ſecured to him a decent and permanent ſubſiſtence. Then again, when I had obtained a freſh ſupply of that neceſſary yellow dirt, which ſerves in civilized nations as the medium of life, I would wander forth amid fields and woods,

and feel triumphant in my own independency. I would feel too the morfel more fweet, for being gained by mental talents—I would feel it almoft facrilege to wifh to exchange the luxury of internal refinement and cultivation for any pecuniary advantages the world can offer.

"My mind fometimes dwelt on the ftrange conduct of Lord St. Albans: an idea that I was his fon haunted me. How elfe could he fo readily have conceived the meaning of my queftions to Goldney? Why elfe fhould he have anfwered them as he did? This perfuafion became daily ftronger and ftronger, and I determined to ftand once more before Lord St. Albans. I had nothing to detain me in one place more than another. I loitered therefore near his houfe, till I was convinced that neither Lord Villars nor Lady Matilda were at home, and the door being opened to me by a fervant, to whom I was unknown, I was introduced at once to the Earl.

"He knew me inftantly, and ordered the man to turn me out. I calmly turned round to the man, and affured him I was no ruffian, but had particular and private bufinefs with Lord St. Albans. The man, as was his duty, was preparing to obey his mafter. I was, however, at that moment nerved by refolution, and feizing him, forcibly

forcibly pushed him out of the room: then calmly securing the door, I advanced to the Earl.

'My Lord,' said I, 'you would not be so eager to dismiss me, were you not conscious I have a claim to be heard. I am your son, Lord St. Albans!'—His teeth gnashed with rage—his cheeks lost every particle of colour. I repeated aloud, 'I am your son!'

'Where did you—who has dared——'

"His words were now not more incoherent than unintelligible.

'My Lord,' resumed I, 'you yourself have been my informer. Your emissary, Goldney, has been true to his trust. Your own unjustifiable rage, your present agitation, all confirm it. I am your son!'

'I defy you,' said he, 'to prove your words.'

'I am perfectly indifferent,' returned I, 'whether they are ever proved or not. I mean not to assume any splendour in consequence of knowing myself to be the offspring of an Earl; but suffer me to ask, why was I brought into the world, why was I taught all kinds of learning, and then left to chance, to misery, to ruin?'

'Let me ask you two questions, Mr. Dellwyn,'

Dellwyn,' faid the Earl, fternly but calmly. 'If you are not my fon, in what light can you juftify this conduct? And if you are fuch, how dare you queftion your father?"

'If the name of *father* gives you any rights, my Lord,' replied I, 'the name of *fon* gives me no fewer. The fort of protection hitherto beftowed, the education I have received, perhaps call upon you for ftill more than the mere paternal relation. If, on the contrary, I am not your fon, I may demand, in my turn, what meant your vehemence when I met Mr. Goldney here?'

'Learn all you wifh to know from Goldney,' retorted the Earl. 'He can explain the myftery to you.'

'He cannot root from my bofom,' returned I, 'the conviction that you are my father—and I can proudly fay, I was not unworthy of your intended bounty—I am not unworthy of your regard and affection; but think not, my Lord, that I would now accept either: your bounty I fhould defpife, and your affection I could not return.'

'This infolence is paft bearing,' faid the Earl.

'I am not infolent, my Lord,' faid I; 'I am only refolute. Declare once upon your honour that I am not your fon, and I will make any apology for my conduct, and quit your prefence directly.'

'Are you to dictate to me," faid Lord St. Albans,

Albans, 'the conditions on which you will leave me at peace?'

'I have a right to insist on an answer to this question,' said I; 'you have raised this idea in my heart, and I am entitled to have it confirmed or destroyed by a positive answer!'

Here a leaf of the manuscript is wanting.

"Lord Villars was kind, affectionate, and generous, but his endeavours came too late; the incurable blow was struck, and I laboured under the slow but sure disease of a broken heart. In vain he spoke to me in the voice of the most soothing friendship; in vain he dwelt upon the name of *brother:* I could not reflect without horror that I owed my birth to a man who had disgraced humanity by his treatment of my mother. Too feeble now to record the dreadful tissue of villany by which she was deceived, I can only say, it ought to stamp the name of St. Albans with eternal infamy. The amiable Lady Villars too exerted all her powers to console me. She spoke to me of my unfortunate mother; she recollected every little incident that she thought would prove to me her superiority to her sorrows. As she

ſhe deſcribed her, I thought of my dear Miſs Goldney, now dear to me in the ſad light of ſiſter to my mother.

"Lord Villars was pleaſed to ſee the power the ſoothings of his Matilda had over my mind. He beſought me to reſide wholly with them; but though the love I bore to the lovely Lady Villars was no longer impetuous, it was ſtill too tender to allow me to ſee her daily. The tones of her voice, the touch of her hand, the glance of her eye quickened my pulſes, and agonized my feelings. I became convinced that I ſhould only linger on in irremediable weakneſs, while I continued to behold her ſo frequently. I determined to remove to a diſtance from thoſe, whoſe friendſhip, more than any earthly bleſſing, would have ſoothed me, but for the nature of my feelings for the Lady Matilda.

"I reſolved to bend my courſe into Wales. I paſſed through the village where mine infant years had been ſpent. I wept over the grave of my dear Miſs Goldney; and as I gazed on the records of frail mortality which ſurrounded me, I perceived, in an obſcure corner, a plain black tablet, which I approached—

MARIA GOLDNEY,

Aged 25.

"Oh,

“ Oh, what bitter tears did I ſhed over the tomb of my mother ! I knew not how to tear myſelf thence !

“ At length I reached this romantic country ; but its pure air, its ſalubrious whey cannot reſtore a conſtitution broken by incurable ſorrow. I have found here hoſpitality unbounded, ſympathy ſincere, and genuine affection.—Yes, worthy and virtuous people, your generous ſimplicity has ſoothed a broken heart, and calmed the jarring irritated paſſions of an injured man. And thou, lovely flower, whoſe mild eyes beam the ſweeteſt pity for ſorrows no human aid can relieve, Oh may thy lot through life be happy ! May no artful villain lay ſnares for thy unſuſpecting innocence ; but happy in mutual love, mayſt thou ſometimes ſhed a melancholy tear over my early grave !

“ Had I been left in utter ignorance, I might have been contented and happy. No dreams of perfection, no viſions of felicity would have diſturbed my quiet eaſe ; but ah, ever dear Miſs Goldney ! you opened to my view a ſpecies of happineſs, to which my ſoul was congenial ; nor could mere vulgar comforts have ſatisfied a being who had been formed by your converſe ! Not long will it be ere I join your pure ſpirit and my bleſſed mother's in thoſe realms whence we ſhall view

view with pity the errors of misguided man! I feel daily the approaches of the deliverer, Death!—I welcome those symptoms which tell me I have not long to groan under the sense of hopeless misery: even now I can rejoice in the continued happiness of Lord Villars and Matilda. Dear to my soul as she will ever be, while it retains its consciousness, my love is purified from every selfish emotion, and exults in her felicity. To that love I have owed much———"

There abruptly ends this little history. Whether thus suddenly left by the increasing weakness of its hapless writer, or whether another leaf has been lost, I cannot determine:—such as it is, however, it is sufficiently connected to create interest; and the gentle spirit of Philip Dellwyn will be gratified with the sympathy his fate will have excited.

No. VIII.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1799.

I AM inclined to think that there has, among ſome of my progenitors, been ſome aberration from the uſual practice of marrying entirely among the branches of our own family, and that I am deſtined to feel the effects of it. It happened not among my own immediate parents; for my father, Sir Nicholas Saunter, always valued himſelf on having preferred his ſecond couſin, Arabella Saunter, to the Lady Matilda Mohair, a great heireſs, whoſe eſtate joined his own: and my grandmother, the Dowager Lady Saunter, was a woman of great heraldic knowledge, and would have inſtantly detected any deviation from the eſtabliſhed rule of the family.

My

My reasons for this supposition are founded on a retrospect of my own life. I remember, when I was very young, shewing a decided partiality for literature, which my mother, with proper judgment, and becoming asperity, very prudently repressed, endeavouring to confine my studies to the little books, which, either from their attractive gilded covers, or from their engaging interior qualities, once obtained for Mr. Newberry a fame which every one thought would be immortal. But even fame, in this transitory and fugacious world, is found to be a perishable commodity. New sets of books have arisen for children, which have driven friend Newberry's off the stage—a change to which I may perhaps dedicate a future speculation; but the present is devoted to a different subject.

I cannot deny but that I studied these publications with amazing avidity, and shewed the retentive powers of my memory in the precision with which I could relate the surprising events brought about by elfin power, the animating occurrences of a fair, or the pathetic and interesting Adventures of Goody Two Shoes: but even in my reading these suitable compositions, I discovered a thirst after knowledge, a turn for criticism, and a love for arguing, that were evident auguries of the strength of mind I was hereafter

destined to possess. I am, perhaps, the best reasoner of any man in England, can follow an argument with most logical precision; and when I have beat my adversary on his own ground, can shift sides, and beat him on mine; and all this with that perfect coolness which indicates the gentleman.

I fear this activity of mind rather bespeaks a little obliquity in blood. I fear our escutcheon is not so decidedly free from blots as I flattered myself it was. Sometimes indeed, when this idea has harassed and perplexed me, I have comforted myself with reflecting, that there are busy saunterers as well as idle ones,—that many who study at the bar, declaim in the pulpit, and thunder in the senate, are still true and legitimate branches of our family!—that a man may ride a fox-chace, lose twenty thousand pounds at a horse-race, or a whole estate at the gaming-table—nay, what is more, he may win one too, and yet not disgrace the blood of the Saunters!—It is not drinking deep, studying hard, nor travelling like wildfire that disqualifies a man from claiming kindred with our illustrious house. These "flaws and starts" may break out in youth, and be corrected in mature life, or, even if never corrected, they do not of themselves argue any illegitimacy, particularly near the outward edge of that extensive circle of

 affinity,

affinity, which feems daily fpreading, till in time it will embrace the whole nation.

Were I only a twentieth coufin, I would not lament thefe fymptoms; but that I, fo near the head, the fountain of our noble blood, fhould fhew any tokens of degeneracy, cuts me to the heart: nay, had I furmounted thefe follies in my early youth, I had confoled myfelf for them; but even now, on revolving the learning of my boyifh days, to feel the fame wild enthufiafm rifing that my poor mother took fuch pains to allay, I own this circumftance chagrins me. But, however, it is now too late to refort to that prudence which, by concealing this truth, would have made it of no avail.

My readers probably, had I not thus given them a right clue, might not have difcovered that I was deviating from the characteriftic fleepinefs of mind that diftinguifhes the Saunters. I know I might now have recourfe to prudence; and while this paper is but half written, I might throw it into the fire, and for ever conceal thofe powers of intellect that give me fo much concern: but here again, the genuine family feeling prevents me.—What! throw into the fire two well-written fides of foolfcap, merely becaufe they contain a candid avowal of fome defects in my character!

character! Be it known, that a certain amiable ingenuousness, a carelessness who knows the specks and blemishes that float on the surface of that clear lake, the mind, is one strong mark of genuine ancestry, and a reluctance unconquerable to destroy at one blow the labours even of a leisure hour, to be obliged to search the "volume of my brain" for a new subject, when this is all properly arranged, cannot but be a strong impress of family resemblance.

Even take it then, gentle reader, as it is, and I will proceed to inform thee, what it is that has caused all this train of alarms respecting my—I will not call it illegitimacy—but my descending in rather a waving line from the first great root of our family, of whom, perhaps, in some future paper, I may give my readers an account. Should that labour be too much for me, there is a young man lately entered into the Herald's Office, who, eager to shew his near affinity, is actually employed in drawing the arborescent pedigree of our house, and has busied himself with his brother, who belongs to the Antiquarian Society, in examining sundry parchments, and antique manuscripts, which will serve to elucidate the subject of his labours: and I once heard the Antiquarian hint at a project of compiling from these papers a volume of Family Biography, in which he

promised

promifed to give me a diftinguifhed place, if I would but acknowledge him as my relation. Flattering as muft be the profpect of being held forth in a ftrong light to the admiration of the world, I, with fortitude, which Cicero never knew, rejected the offer, unlefs he could bring fubftantial proofs that he had a legal claim to be fo acknowledged; and on this iffue the matter refts. I wifh indeed the young men may be enabled to quarter the arms of Saunter, for they appear to have very honeft difpofitions.

These little remarks have led me wholly from my intended fubject; but fear not, gentle reader—the thread is not fnapped, it is only ftretched. I will now refume it.

I was led into this vein of thought by hearing a little boy, a nephew of mine, repeat a fmall compofition, which was in my younger days a particular favourite with me. The child was repeating it merely as an exercife, the purpofe for which I believe it is ufually taught to children; but I remembered with a blufh, that when I learned it, I had difcovered in it ftrong principles of elocution, deep enquiry, and accurate conclufion. The compofition is not long; but even now I think it combines many extraordinary merits, which probably the whole race of fchoolboys overlook. for

I underftand

I underſtand the great point in repeating it, is, not to aff x the true meaning to every word, or to obſerve the logical manner in which the enquiry and reſult are founded on the premiſes, but to rehearſe it three times without drawing breath. Undoubtedly, as an exerciſe of this kind, the difficulty of pronouncing the words with ſufficient rapidity to perform it within the compaſs of time that a human being can exiſt without repeating the act of reſpiration, renders it an uſeful leſſon in the art of elocution.—Children are inſtructed to uſe active plays in order to give pliability and ſtrength to their muſcles; why then ſhould they not, on the ſame principle, be taught embarraſſing combinations of words, to enable them to conquer any difficulties they may hereafter have to encounter in the art of ſpeaking?—Had Demoſthenes, at four years old, been accuſtomed to recite the compoſition alluded to, in the manner I deſcribe, he would not have been neceſſitated to reſort, in his riper years, to the toilſome expedient of filling his mouth with ſtones, and declaiming to the angry billows.—My readers muſt be impatient: I will declaim no longer, leſt, like thoſe billows, they ſhould chafe and rage; yet I cannot help adding, that I do not wonder the waves were in a paſſion with a man who addreſſed them in ſuch copious and flowing ſtrains, when the only language they had been accuſtomed to hear,

near, was, though energetic, remarkably conciſe. But to my theme—

" Peter Piper pick'd a peck of pepper;
" If Peter Piper pick'd a peck of pepper,
" Where's the peck of pepper Peter Piper pick'd?"

The firſt circumſtance that ſtrikes the eye or the ear of common obſer[illegible]n this ſmall compoſition, is the frequent rec[illegible]ence of the letter P—a figure now well known by the name of alliteration, and thought to add no ſmall beauty to the fineſt poems: but I doubt whether any modern poet ever had ſo full a command of this admirable figure, as the author of the above ſmall compoſition. I know not whether it would be allowed to be a poem, yet I think it has all the inherent qualities of poetry. Break the lines as you pleaſe, the mutilated fragments are ſtill "*disjuncta membra poetæ.*" Nay, ſo perfect is the harmony, that even putting the laſt half of the line firſt, does not injure it, as the author has ſhewn in the laſt line, (to prove his wonderful powers of arrangement) where the *peck of pepper* precedes *Peter Piper!* The two firſt lines evidently correſpond in termination; and the cloſe of the third line has that full, ſonorous beauty, that leaves the ear and mind perfectly ſatisfied.

Let us now examine the art of the author in raising a strong interest in the mind of the reader. We are at first simply told the fact, according to a well-known critical rule, that narrative should be clear and concise. To this rule the ingenious poet has well attended; and in the circumstance related, we find such an air of historical truth and verisimilitude, and such unadorned conciseness and inimitable brevity in relation, that we sit down contented, nor suffer doubt to arise of the credibility of the information received—"*Peter Piper pick'd a peck of pepper.*" Good—here is the simple fact related; and though an enquiring mind may immediately busy itself in calculating how many pepper-corns would go to fill a peck measure, or perhaps some malevolent cynic would ask, with a sneer, whether Peter Piper had employed himself upon pepper ground or whole, black or white, and so forth,—the candid reader would recollect that it is the business of an author to record the grand facts, and those that put you at once in possession of the hero's character, without descending to the *minutiæ.* No one can retain even a momentary doubt of Peter Piper's diligence, industry, and application; and no one but must regret that talents so conspicuous, were devoted to the occupation of picking pepper, rather than writing commentaries upon Shakespeare.

Peter

Peter Piper thus introduced to our acquaintance, we ſet him down as an induſtrious picker of pepper, and feel ſatisfied with every thing but the brevity of the apologue. Immediately, however, follows a line which informs us there is yet more to come. The emphatical "*If*" at the beginning of the ſecond line, or middle diviſion of the compoſition or poem, rouſes all the enquiring faculties of the mind. A doubt is raiſed! a fact ſo clear and undiſputed, falls at once into uncertainty, by the magic virtue of this little "*If*."— Touchſtone indeed allows "great virtue in your *If*;" but the virtue he diſcovered was of the compoſing and healing kind: whereas in this inſtance the application of the word rouſes all the tumultuous paſſions, and confidence is as ſeverely ſhaken as when a late ingenious and noble author promulgated his doubts as to the perſonal and mental deformity of Richard the Third.

"What," exclaims the candid reader, "and is it then poſſible that Peter Piper did not pick the peck of pepper?"

"Poſſible," returns the cynic, "it was hardly poſſible he ſhould have done it. I told you before, if the author wiſhed to gain credit for ſo improbable an achievement, he ſhould have ſpecified the peculiarities

peculiarities of the pepper, whether black or white, whole or ground: that is the way to obtain belief;—for my own part, this ſtatement only confirms the doubt I before entertained, "*If Peter Piper pick'd a peck of pepper.*" Yes, yes, the author here wiſhes to come off handſomely; he knows he can bring no proof of his aſſertion."

Not ſo, however, the generality of mankind; only here and there a Zoilus, who dares to cavil at what gives univerſal pleaſure. I muſt confeſs, on conſidering the third diviſion of this little compoſition, that the author has ſhewn more ſkill in touching the paſſions, than in diſtributing poetical juſtice: the mind is left in a melancholy diſpoſition on reading the concluſion!

"Where's the peck of pepper Peter Piper pick'd?"

"Aye, where indeed!" exclaims the inſulting cynic; "I defy any one of you to produce it; and now what becomes of your aſſertion?"—"Where indeed!" laments the candid reader; "Oh that the belief of ſuch induſtry ſhould fall to the ground when aſſailed by ſuch a queſtion!"

Be that as it may, this pathetic apoſtrophe appeals moſt forcibly to the feelings, and leaves the mind

mind impreſſed with that tender melancholy, which is ſo favourable to virtuous emotions, that I ſhould not wonder if many ardent individuals were to ſally forth true knights-errant in the cauſe, determined to find the peck of pepper, or to die. I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if the very identical peck of pepper, with the initials P. P. on the corner of the bag that holds it, were to be found in the ſame iron cheſt that contained the Shakeſpeare Papers. I was hinting this idea to a friend of mine the other day, a man of great critical acumen; and after deliberating a long time, he replied, "I ſhould rather think it probable, Mr. Saunter, that in that cheſt might be diſcovered the other half of this excellent compoſition; for I have long been of opinion that it is but a mutilated fragment. The author has diſplayed ſuch admirable talents, that I cannot believe he would have left a piece of ſuch merit ſo imperfect, as to end with a note of interrogation. I cannot entertain a doubt but the other half has been deſtroyed by the malevolence of ſome enemies to true literature and good taſte; though perhaps a copy may, by good fortune, be found in ſome of thoſe repoſitories of ancient works of merit, whence every now and then ſome happy being has the advantage of ſelecting ſome to improve the world. Indeed, this little piece has before now

employed my thoughts, and I had once an idea that it originally ran as follows:

> A peck of pepper Peter Piper pick'd.
> If a peck of pepper Peter Piper pick'd,
> Where's the peck of pepper Peter Piper pick'd?

"To ſay nothing of the beauty which inverſe conſtruction beſtows on poetry, the uniformity of the endings for a long while induced me to think this the true reading; but ſince the idea of a ſecond part being ſomewhere to be met with, has occurred to my mind, I have abandoned this novel arrangement of the lines; for I cannot but acknowledge that there is ſomething inexpreſſibly melodious and pathetic in the double endings of the two firſt lines, according to the common reading."

Here my friend making a pauſe, his nephew, a youth of fifteen, with great modeſty affirmed that, in his idea, the piece ought rather to be judged by the rules of logic, than by thoſe of poetry:—he acknowledged indeed the poetical beauties we had been diſcuſſing, but he thought it a perfect model of a logical ſyllogiſm, whereas we acknowledged that its inconcluſive concluſion was an imperfection, conſidering it as a poem.

But

But the oration of my friend's nephew muft be given in another paper.

No. IX.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1799.

HAVING been in rather a more indolent humour this day than common, I have applied to my publiſher's box for materials for my paper, and have been ſo ſucceſsful, that I have only been embarraſſed how to make a proper ſelection. I hope my readers will think I have choſen well.

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, Eſq.

" Sir,

" I am a woman of ſome talents, which a good education enabled me to cultivate with

with much pleasure to myself, and with no interruption from love, till I was some years past what is usually supposed to be the age of romance. Among my pursuits, I had not neglected that branch of philosophy which the French call *la petite morale*, and which so admirably directs our journey through this troublesome world. In consequence, I had formed some salutary resolutions for my own guidance, and among these, two of the foremost were, that I would never marry a man younger than myself, and that I would never consent to live any where but in Arcadian shades and Elysian fields.

" Unfortunately, Mr. Saunter, I am fallen desperately in love with a young man who is ten years my junior, and whose profession and taste both determine his residence to be necessarily in London. Do, dear Mr. Saunter, help me to some classical authority, or some old woman's saying of equal venerability, to reconcile me to this breach of resolutions. If indeed, example would comfort me for my versatility, I could instance Clarinda, who had an insuperable aversion to a wig, and a suit of dittos, till a rich suitor persuaded her they were the most becoming dress in the world;—or Petronilla, whose antipathy for the Church was so great, that she declared she would as soon marry a chimney-sweeper as a Parson:

Parson: she now, however, looks with an eye of complacency on her husband, the Dean.—Nay, I have known those young ladies who were most vehement in their resolutions against marrying at all, amongst the earliest married of my acquaintance; and strong determinations against particular men have been broken within my knowledge in more instances than the limits of a letter would allow me to enumerate.

"Do you think, Mr. Saunter, that I may console myself with these examples for my own inconsistency, or shall I shelter myself under the plea of respect to the opinion of an old aunt of mine, who, whenever I repeated my resolutions, always predicted she should see me, when an old maid, running away with a boy of eighteen, and living in a two-pair of stairs lodging in a narrow court in London?

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"INAMORATA."

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

"Sir,

"I am a young man, of whom, in my progress through the various stages of a

liberal education, it has been uniformly predicted that I should make a figure in the world; and as I feel within myself a spirit easily stirred to ambition, I am unwilling to disappoint these predictions. But alas, Sir, how am I to verify them? It is true, I have a sufficient store of mathematical and classical learning. I am well acquainted with the best writers of our own country, and all modern languages are tolerably familiar to me: nor am I destitute of fortune, or friends to advance me in any situation I should prefer; but alas, Sir, one great misfortune counterbalances all these advantages.

I have for some time observed that the ladies in all companies are in a titter whenever I approach,—that my observations are coldly received,—and that one day, in particular, when I endeavoured to engage a lady, who is reputed sensible, in an etymological discussion on the fashionable names of public places, she listened to me with great complacency till a young fellow came up with a shock head of hair, and a huge neckcloth, and with some trifling nonsense wholly diverted her attention.—One young lady, who is very much my friend, seems to observe my situation with compassion, and I have often importuned her to tell me the cause of it; but the other day, when the footman had announced my name to a circle

of lively lasses, I was closer behind him than they imagined, for I heard one of them say, "Oh Lord, that Quiz!" The mystery was now unravelled: I am stamped with the name of *Quiz*, and though I can find no classical nor philosophical authority for the persecution I suffer, I feel that it is a sufficient bar to my ever making a figure in life. Pray, Mr. Saunter, had I not better renounce society, and turn Author at once?

"I am, Sir,

"Your profound admirer,

"MUSCIPULUS."

Yes!

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

"Friend Saunter,

"As much a Solomon as thou mayst think thyself, thou art confoundedly mistaken in thy calculations respecting *Greatness*, or rather, as I understand it, *the adequate pursuit of the human mind*, to adopt one of thy musty phrases. I may pretend, Sir, to some knowledge of the world, having lived in it in the very first style for fifty-five years and a half; and having tried all the various modes of life, am perhaps enabled to pronounce with more certainty on the grand desideratum,

deratum, than an old codger who sits down at his desk to consider subjects, in which he can boast of no individual interest.

« I came into life, Sir, at the age of twenty, possessed of a splendid fortune, and a disposition to distinguish myself. The vanities of dress and equipage presented the easiest and most obvious road to greatness; and for some years I was followed as the model of fashion, and imitated by all those who wished to rival, though they despaired of eclipsing, my fame. Dress and equipage, those toys of youth, were however at length superseded by the charms of woman, and in lovely woman I thought I had at length found the only true pursuit worthy of my aspiring mind; but even this pleasure became at length vapid, and I rose once more to the pinnacle of fame by means of my hunters and hounds. From hunters, I aspired to racers; and, but that I found greatness there so devilishly expensive, I am not sure that I might not there have satisfied my ardour. The transition was natural from the turf to the gaming-table, and I found in that pursuit an interest which swallowed up all other cares and wishes, and agitated my mind to a degree that left no room for any other idea. Nor did the stimulus pall on repetition; on the contrary, it resembled thy pyramid inverted:—my affection for gaming began

began in a very trifling degree, and progressively extended itself, till it not only covered the whole surface, but pervaded the inmost recesses of my mind.

" A series of losses, however, drove me from the gaming-table, just as I had begun philosophically to determine that gaming was indeed the only true occupation worthy of a rational being; and indeed, Sir, I have still much to say in favour of that profession, though I have ceased to follow it. There are few, very few studies that so elevate the mind, and teach it to support with such calm equanimity the smiles and frowns of Fortune. A gamester hazards his whole fortune on a throw with a fortitude and tranquillity as heroic, as surprising, as that with which Alexander drank the supposed poison in the presence of his physician. Nay, the fortitude of the gamester is perhaps greater than that of the conqueror:—in one case, the poison was only suspected, and against the chance of it, was to be weighed the unblemished character of the physician; in the other, the danger is certain, and from the character of the opponent, little confidence is to be drawn. Moreover, gaming exercises, in a high degree, the talents of caution and foresight; it teaches the mind to fix its view on one object, and to press invariably forward, discouraged by no obstacles, depressed by

no difficulties, till it obtain the glorious prize, or fail in the attempt with the almoſt equal glory of having boldly dared.

"But, Sir, it is not my intention to write a panegyric on gaming; I only wiſh to convince you that the world is not ſo deſtitute of worthy purſuits as you, from your cobwebbed cloſet, would lead us to imagine. I, Sir, have abjured gaming; and to qualify my ſorrow for this abjuration, I, for a while, devoted myſelf to the bottle: but the bottle, Sir, cannot be always in the hand, and the mornings admitted but too much leiſure for repentance and reflection.

"Fortunately I was one day invited to a table, where I found my genius awakened to a new purſuit by the elegance and poignancy of the diſhes; and from that happy hour, I have bent all the powers of my mind to the improvement of the ſcience of eating. Here I find full employment even for my active and indefatigable genius. The due arrangement of the table, ſo as alternately to ſtimulate and gratify appetite, the exquiſite intermixture of ingredients, the judicious appropriation of ſauces, form the ſcientific part of the ſtudy; and let me tell you, Sir, that when you conſider the importance of the purſuit, you will not look upon the time thus ſpent, as waſted on a frivolous topic.

topic.—What is it that sets in motion all the activity in the world, to whatever ostensible point it may be directed?—What is it that induces the student to immerse himself in literature, that he may hereafter astonish mankind with some sublime production?—What sharpens the sword of the warrior, or the genius of the statesman?—What gives brilliancy to the colours of the painter, rapidity to the finger of the musician, or harmony to the verse of the poet?—What sets at work the invention of the artist, or the industry of the mechanic?—What prompts the eloquence of the lawyer, or the adventurous spirit of the merchant?—Why does the knave swindle, or the parasite bow?—What gives ductility to the mind and manners of the courtier, or hardens the heart of the surgeon?—What——but the questions would be endless:—they may be all thus answered—The want of a dinner! This is the mighty spring that directs all the movements of the various animated puppets that play their part on the great theatre of the world.

"Fame, virtue, power, money are all but concomitant and very inferior parts of one great design, of which the *primum mobile* is the wish to eat!—The necessity of eating for the purpose of self-preservation secures the permanency of the pursuit:—and since it is allowed by all moralists

and

and philosophers, that that which we do at all, it is right to do well, surely no blame can attach to those who apply themselves and all their corporeal and mental faculties to promote the improvement of this grand art, and to teach others, while they themselves learn, to eat well?

"Another advantage in this pursuit is, that it is admirably adapted to all ages, capacities, and stations. It adds a new laurel to the wreath of the warrior, that he can excel in the management of his table; and that statesman can be but ill qualified to guide the helm of state, who is inadequate to the arrangement of his delicacies. I am happy to find that this taste (and surely, Sir, of all the branches of mental accomplishment, none more accurately deserve the name) is becoming daily and hourly more prevalent. Young and old, male and female, grave and gay, are alike absorbed in it; and what with the toil of ordering the next meal, and the labour necessary to digest the last, it really affords sufficient employment for all the hours a person of fashion lives out of the four-and-twenty.—It supplies the gentlemen with an occupation that well fills up all the time they can spare from the amiable frivolities of life; for I find many of our senators, lawgivers, and warriors have justly taken into consideration the undue estimation into which the art of eating had fallen, and have

have made it their own province. The fportfman now not only kills the game, but infpects it in the larder, and with nofe as judicious as the well-trained pointers, directs the aufpicious moment for dreffing it. The domeftic fceptre veers alternately between the male and female of the family; and while the attention of both is thus bent to one object, who can doubt of their ultimate fuccefs?—Boys at fchool are competent to decide on the merits of made-difhes, and I do not doubt but we fhall foon have lectures on the abftrufer parts of the fcience by regular bred profeffors:—nor will it be any wonder to fee the names of Raffald, Glaffe, and Farley difpoffeffed of their honours, and replaced by fome worthy luminary of the world of fcience, dignified with proper academical honours.

"I rejoice to fee, Mr. Saunter, that we are fo clofely following the fteps of ancient Rome.—That once great miftrefs of the world, after having exhaufted all that war, politics, philofophy, or fcience could afford of grand and fatisfactory, turned her united powers to this laft refource of active minds. The feafts of the Romans will now, however, be eclipfed, I doubt not, by the entertainments of Britons; and the defcendants of Caractacus, Boadicea, and the fimple, unrefined natives of this ifle, who fuftained their painted bodies on hips, floes, and the luxurious bounties of

of nature, will rival the Lucullus's, the Heliogabalus's of their conquerors.

"I am, Sir,

"Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

"APICIUS."

To SOLOMON SAUNTER, Esq.

"Admired Sir,

"I am but a young philoſopher, and therefore ought with the greateſt diffidence to oppoſe my opinion to yours; but really, with ſubmiſſion, I think, in your third Number, you debaſe the value of literature with a ſpirit rather indignant than philoſophical. Surely, Sir, the purſuits of genius are ſufficiently expanſive to fill up the greateſt extent of the human mind. I own, when I fall into contemplation on the force of genius in the intellectual world, or the grand and ſublime objects in the natural one, I am overpowered with the mightineſs of the conceptions that oppreſs me. The other day, after a peruſal of your eſſay, I fell into one of theſe rhapſodies, and the following lines are the production

tion of my excurfive Mufe. If you think them worthy of a place in your excellent paper, you will greatly flatter,

"Sir,

"Your conftant reader,

"JUVENIS."

Oh bear[illegible]e to fome wild romantic fcene
Where th[illegible] vile touch of Art hath never [illegible];
Where rocks and forefts, fens, and [illegible]ountains [illegible]d
[illegible]ark the true majefty of Nature's hand!
There, on fo[illegible] impending rude,
Reclines [illegible] penfive wood-nymph, Solitude;
While in the foreft's dark bewildering maze
Her lonely offspring, Contemplation, ftrays.
There, where the torrent frights the peaceful dell,
Where, o'er their bounds, th' impetuous rivers fwell,
Where the wild chamois browfes on the brow
Of fome rude fteep, nor heeds the gulph below;
Where, thrown acrofs the chafm, the rifted pine
Serves fearfully th' oppofing hills to join—
In fcenes like thefe, exalted Genius roves,
And dares the browneft horrors of the groves;

Delights

Delights to hear the winds of winter rave
Thro' shatter'd trees, or heave the boiling wave;
To mark the rapid lightning's arrowy flash,
To hear the following thunder's sudden crash!
While the rude rocks and echoing mountains round
Reverberate the deep, the solemn sound.—
Could I but once delight my ravish'd eye
With such wild scenes of [illegible] sublimity,
Could I but pierce the cave that Genius haunts,
Catch the bold melodies he nobly chants—
Or from his garland snatch one leaf of bay,
Immortal honour should the theft repay;
Thro' distant ages should my song resound,
[illegible] my blen[illegible] name with endless [illegible] crown'd.

No. X.

[illegible]ursday, November 28, 1799.

AMONG the papers of the unfortunate Philip Dellwyn, whose story I laid before my readers in my fifth, sixth, and seventh Numbers, I have found several pieces in verse, with which I shall occasionally intersperse my lucubrations; and feeling to-day some of the constitutional laziness of my family upon me, I shall only transcribe the following Ballad.

ATHLONE CASTLE.

A LEGENDARY TALE.

HIGH on a rock, where not a ſhrub
 Adorn'd the frowning ſtone,
In Gothic grandeur roſe ſublime
 The towers of proud Athlone!

Amid a wild and rugged waſte
 The gloomy manſion ſtood;
Before it ſpread the barren plain,
 Behind it roar'd the flood!

And ſtill, when roſy morning dawn'd
 Acroſs the eaſtern ground,
And when the dark grey evening threw
 Her deepening ſhades around,

Sad Margaret to the turret hy'd,
 That overlook'd the wild,
There watch'd, and wept,—and never hope
 The anxious hours beguil'd:

For

For many, many a tedious week,
And many a month had flown,
Since her lov'd Lord, at Honour's call,
Had quitted proud Ath[illegible]

The c[illegible]ll blaſt howl'd! the bittern ſcream'd!
The livid lightning flaſh'd!
The thunder roar'd!—and down the rock,
The torrent hoarſer daſh'd!

[illegible]d Margaret left her ſleepleſs bed,
With trembling terror wild!
She haſten'd to the turret drear,
A[illegible]p'd her ſleeping child!

The ſavage blaſt had rudely torn
The ca[illegible]ment from the wall;
And at her feet with pond'rous craſh,
She ſaw the ruin fall!

To the defenceleſs breach ſhe went,
Nor moon, nor ſtars appear'd!
And thro' the wind and torrent's roar,
The thunder loud was heard!

Yet Margaret look'd acroſs the plain
To ſee her Lord appear!
And try'd amid the whiſtling winds
His well-known voice to hear!

But thick the damp fog ſpread around,
And nought was to be ſeen,
Save when the lightning's lurid flaſh
Illum[illegible]ild ſcene !

Sudden !—the miſty fog was gone !
The atmoſphere was clear'd !
And, by the radiance of the moon,
The diſtant hills appear'd !

Extending numerous o'er the plain,
She ſaw two martial bands ;
Their crimſon banners wav'd in air,
Steel glitter'd in their hands.

She heard the deafening din of arms,
She heard the victor's ſhout !
She heard the ſhrieks of deep diſtreſs
From the defeated rout !

The fog again o'erſpread the plain,
The hoſtile bands were gone !
And on the turret's mouldering walls
Blue trailing wildfire ſhone !

And now a hollow voice was heard
Of deep ſepulchral tone !
Loud it exclaim'd—denouncing woe !
"Deep woe to proud Athlone !"

And tho' the mist still spread around
Its damp unwholesome sway,
She plainly saw, athwart the gloom
A funeral's black array.

Dimly the hallow'd tapers gleam'd!
The bell funereal toll'd,
"*The spirit of the waters shriek'd!"
Sad Margaret's blood ran cold!

"Alas! my love! where art thou gone?
"What mystery shrouds thy fate?
"Ah me! the funeral hither comes!
"It stops before the gate!"

She gaz'd—she shriek'd!—for as she gaz'd,
She saw upon the bier,
All cover'd o'er with ghastly wounds,
Her husband's corse appear!

At once, the phantoms vanish'd all,
The howling tempest ceas'd,
And Margaret press'd, with wilder love,
Her infant to her breast!

The infant scream'd; but Margaret drown'd
Its voice with deeper tone!
"Ah never more my love shall come,"
She cry'd, "to proud Athlone!

* From Douglas.

"Nor

“ Nor ever more, my little babe,
“ Shalt thou thy father ſee!
“ What wilt thou do, thou helpleſs child,
“ [illegible] of [illegible]m and me!

“ I feel, I feel my heartſtrings burſt!”
Sad Margaret, ſhivering, cry'd;
She ſunk upon the clay-cold ground,
Kiſs'd her ſweet babe—and died!

Having begun to tranſcribe from the papers of poor Dellwyn, I ſhall make no apology for continuing the ſame employment until I have filled this paper, as I doubt not but my readers will be better pleaſed with more of his productions, th[illegible]n with any thing of my own which might have followed them.

INSCRIPTION FOR A STATUE OF

TIME.

Tho' brighter than the diamond's blaze, thine eye—
Tho' livelier than the ruby's glow, thy lip—
Tho' than the lily fairer is thy ſkin,
And thy cheek lovelier than the opening roſe,
Yet be not vain—for Time ſhall theſe deſtroy!

Time's

Time's hand ſhall pluck the diamond from thine eye—
Rude Time ſhall ſnatch the ruby from thy lip—
Time's breath ſhall fade the lily on thy ſkin—
Time's ſcythe ſhall mow the roſebud from thy cheek!—
Nor yet deſpair!———Time ſhall not all deſtroy!
Fair truth is brighter than the diamond's blaze—
Good-humour, livelier than the ruby's glow—
Chaſtity, fairer than the lily's bell!—
The bluſh of Modeſty beyond the roſe!
Theſe—all-immortal!—Time's rude power defy,
Theſe ſhall outlive the ſkin, lip, cheek, and eye!

SUSPENSE.

Suſpenſe! thou doubtful wavering ſtate,
Bounded alike by joy and pain,
Why do ſad preſages of fate
O'erwhelm the ſoul beneath thy reign?

Why do the ſpirits ne'er prepare
To bid a gleam of hope prevail?
Nor buoyant fancy ever dare
With promis'd bliſs to turn the ſcale?

Too much diſpos'd to fear the worſt,
And every livelier hope preclude,
The ſoul, with fancied miſery curſt,
Repels with ſcorn each offer'd good!

'Tis much indeed, if to the breaſt
A dubious heavy calm be given,
Left, like the prophet's tomb, to reſt,
Exactly pois'd 'twixt earth and heaven!

THE BLUSH.

Roſeate tint of pureſt virtue,
Bloom ethereal, bluſh divine!
Bidding, by thy ſweet ſuffuſion,
Lovelineſs more lovely ſhine!

More than beauty's faireſt feature,
More than form's moſt perfect grace,
Touching the fond heart, and giving
Softeſt charms to every face.

Teſt of quick empaſſion'd feeling
Jewel in the dower of youth;
Modeſty's unqueſtion'd herald,
Pledge of innocence and truth;

Infant paſſion's varying banner,
Trembling conſciouſneſs diſplay'd!
Lover! ſeize the fleeting meteor,
Catch the rainbow ere it fade.

PAGE NO- 121 TO 124 MISSING IN ORIGINAL

The ſame remark may be extended to character. No two people differ more from each other than the ſame individual in different ſocieties. You may ſee a perſon for years together in the ſame ſet of company, and never be acquainted with the *minutiæ* of his character: while, if you meet him by accident with another party, you may perceive, as if by magic, all the varieties of his mind, all the ſhades of his intellect.—I had long been acquainted with Eubulus, as one is acquainted with numberleſs people. I had met him at dinner in the family where he reſides; and thinking him a very unintereſting, though a very good ſort of perſon, I had never paid him any particular attention.—It chanced that one evening Eubulus appeared at a party where I ſhould never have expected to ſee him—in a ſociety where wit, ſentiment, and vivacity gave zeſt to the converſation. I happened to be ſeated oppoſite to him, and was ſurpriſed to ſee features, which appeared to me incapable of animation, brighten with intelligence, and ſparkle with gaiety. I attended to his converſation, and found it replete with delicacy, ſpirit, and taſte; and have ever ſince cultivated him as a valuable friend, and a man of ſuperior intellect.

A ſimilar circumſtance occurred to me once in a mixed company, where ſome topics of taſte were ſtarted, and a perſon, for whoſe judgment I had

had a profound regard, addressed some remarks to a man, whose very common physiognomy and plain appearance promised no advantages; nor could even my esteem for the first speaker detain my attention to the person addressed, till a sentence in a superior style of language caught my ear, and then looking round, I found my utmost attention fully repaid by very accurate information, very sound judgment, and very elegant expression.

I was mentioning this incident one day to a young friend of mine, who has spirit, sense, and emulation.—"Aye," said he, "that would please me: I should like to remain in company unnoticed till some subject called me forth, and then to astonish every body by unexpected talents."

There is certainly something gratifying in thus starting forth when the proper string is touched, as Satan started up in his own form at the touch of Ithuriel's spear; but it is not in every one's power thus to surprise a circle with a sudden display of unsuspected powers: nor does the common ambition to please and shine at all times, always leave the judgment at liberty to select the best occasions for shining.—Wit and talents, like every other trait of human character, depend greatly on secondary causes. The prejudices of education, the peculiar habits of life, the unaccordant manners

of the ſociety in which the lot is caſt, may, as in the caſe of Eubulus, almoſt wholly obſcure them, or may even render the poſſeſſor himſelf unconſcious of his real powers. Even genius, that powerful quality of the mind, by which it ſeizes in an inſtant a bright and forcible idea, creates, combines, and carries into effect by its ſole energy,—even genius may lie dormant in the ſoul for a time, till ſome unthought-of occaſion call it forth, when the force, the energy of a moment may outweigh the whole of a common life. But where there are powers, though not ſufficiently great to merit the name of genius, yet they are generally attended with too much latent conſciouſneſs to be repreſſed even by prejudice, habit, or uncongenial ſociety, as in the caſe of Eubulus; and the poſſeſſor of talent is too fearful of overlooking the properest moment for diſplaying it, to wait till he can fill the meaſure of aſtoniſhment.

Perhaps it is better for the world at large that it ſhould be ſo; were every man to wrap himſelf up in reſerve till a moment worthy of his powers preſented itſelf, how much gay and ſpirited converſation ſhould we loſe! how many charming hours would roll on in unbroken ſtupidity! But we need not fear this alarming conſequence: that reſtleſs and univerſal principle, vanity, is ſucceſsful enough

enough in undermining the pride which would prompt ſuch reſerve; and vanity, though often ſtigmatized as a mean and unworthy paſſion, is yet a very accommodating ſtimulus, and acts very well on the every-day occaſions of life. Nor is my friend Eubulus free from its influence:—in fact, I am not ſure that vanity might not be at the bottom of the miſanthropic gloomy veil in which he had wrapped up his talents. Piqued that he was not more courted and encouraged, he might believe himſelf juſtified in concealing from minds ſo diſſimilar, talents of which he might think them unworthy.

Sometimes, indeed, circumſtances may effectually repreſs the dawnings of genius, and minds, capable of the moſt exalted exertions, may be wholly unconſcious of the latent ſpark of ethereal fire that is ſlumbering within them:—then if any accident kindle the flame, it burſts out at once unſuſpected and invincible, and purſues its career in deſpite of all outward obſtacles.

Julian was the ſon of a mechanic in a populous town; and as ſoon as he could guide the awl, was kept hard to work in his father's ſhop, mending the ſoles of all the pedeſtrians in the town. Julian diſliked cobbling very much, and confinement ſtill more; but he ſtuck to the laſt, only now and then

then making a holiday with fome other boys, for which he never failed to be rewarded with a good drubbing.—At length his father died; and Julian, who was yet too young to fet up as a maker and mender of foles on his own account, was taken as fhop-boy by an oilman within a few doors of his father's ftall. As he had now frequently parcels to carry to different parts of the town, he very much preferred his new way of life; and not feldom did he loiter on his errands to lengthen his enjoyment of frefh air and exercife.

One day he was fent with a parcel to the houfe of Albano, and having lingered more than he commonly did, it was late in the evening ere he arrived. He had been ordered to make hafte, and he found by the old woman who received the parcel, that his negligence had not been unnoticed by Albano; indeed he heard his voice, blaming aloud the mafter of the fhop for not having fent his colours, as he ordered, before the evening.

Julian advanced.—"Sir," faid he modeftly, "my mafter is not to blame—I have been loitering."

"You are an idle rogue, then," faid Albano, coming forward, "and I fhall complain to your

 mafter

maſter of you. It was of conſequence to me to get thoſe colours to finiſh my piece by daylight."

Albano would probably have deſcanted longer on the atrociouſneſs of Julian's conduct, but that the eyes of the lad were fixed moſt attentively on a painting which reſted againſt the wall.

"What are you gazing at," ſaid Albano in a gentler tone.

"I never ſaw any thing ſo beautiful," replied Julian, "except the ſun to-night as it was ſetting behind Wood-Hill."

"Did you ſtop to look at that?" aſked Albano with a ſmile.

"Yes," replied the lad, "I could not help it."

"Come up with me then," ſaid Albano.

Julian tripped after Albano, and beheld with a delight he could find no words to expreſs, a number of fine paintings, ſome by Albano, and ſome by the beſt maſters.—He was all eye: and though he ſcarcely ſpoke three words, he received half-a-crown from Albano, and went home happier than he had ever been before! He played truant no more. Having made up parcels for Albano at different times, he took ſmall quantities of the

different

different colours, and at every leiſure half minute, flew to his garret to grind, to arrange, to view his treaſures.

In time he was again ſent to Albano. He had not now loitered by the way; on the contrary, he was breathleſs with the haſte he had made. He begged to be permitted to take the parcel up ſtairs himſelf. The old woman granted his petition.—Albano was painting. Julian advanced timidly, was welcomed by Albano, and at length gained courage to watch the movements of the maſter's hand. He made new errands, and every errand was a new leſſon.—At length he waited once more on Albano—his parcel was larger than common. He heſitated—looked at the valuable pictures around him—bluſhed—and at length produced a piece of his own. It was the ſun ſetting behind Wood-Hill.—Albano looked at the piece, then at Julian—again at the piece.

"Julian," ſaid he, "this is not perfect, but you muſt not carry out oil and pickles any longer; you ſhall come and grind my colours."

Julian obtained his diſcharge, was received by Albano, became his pupil, and ſoon more than rivalled his maſter.

The happy moment that firſt ſhewed to the wondering eyes of the boy the creative powers of the pencil, awakened in his mind a dormant faculty, of which till then he was unconſcious. Albano muſt have felt a pleaſure of the pureſt kind when he reflected that he had been the means of producing ſuch a genius to the world; for though perhaps, in the grave calculations of moraliſts and philoſophers, it is of no real conſequence to mankind to have painters, poets, or ſculptors, yet it cannot be denied but that thoſe elegant arts are in themſelves great ſources of pleaſure. Thoſe who only admire the effects produced, find in them no inconſiderable addition to their enjoyment; while thoſe whoſe powers produce the effect, derive from their exertion a conſtant, and ſurely a laudable fountain of delight. Who then ſhall ſay, that the faculty of conceiving and executing works which rouſe all the powers of the mind, confer delight on the artiſt during the performance, and gratify numbers with the mere ſight of it,—who ſhall ſay theſe faculties, theſe feelings, were implanted in our minds for no purpoſe, that they are unworthy the purſuit or the admiration of a reaſonable being? For my part, I am convinced that every feeling was placed in our minds for ſome good purpoſe; and the powers of genius, of wit, of taſte, of ſenſe, of ſpirit, were never given us to lie dormant.

Man

Man was made to be happy; and if these faculties add to his happiness, why should they be thrown from him with ingratitude?

There is not a single capacity in the soul which has not the power of conferring happiness. The very sensibility which heightens the sense of pain, disposes to a quicker relish of pleasure. Those minds are perhaps most open to playful gaiety and frolic vivacity, that are most capable of the extremes of tender melancholy. Outward circumstance will probably determine whether either shall habitually predominate; and there are some minds so nicely poised that, when any exquisite feelings are roused, if of the melancholy kind, they will perhaps conceal the acuteness of them under a veil of the most sportive levity. I can easily conceive that when situation forbids the expression of the real misery that rankles at the heart, it may be necessary to resort to almost extreme vivacity; for the powers of the mind would be incapable otherwise of keeping down the struggling feeling.

I have taken in this paper the privilege I reserved to myself of wandering as much as I pleased from the subject I set out upon; and as I am in no humour to join the broken thread together again, I shall fill up my paper with some letters just as they occur.

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"Sir,

"I am surprised that a man, who, like your correspondent in the third Number of your speculations, seems to pique himself on the greatness of his attainments, should be even ignorant of the name of the implement he pretends to have improved. It is to *Mr. Rotundo Magnus* I allude, who says he has devoted much time and study to the improvement of the bandalore or vandalore, professing himself ignorant of the correct spelling of the word. I am astonished, Mr. Saunter, that you could admit so very ignorant a being to the honour of your correspondence:—it is a pity he had not devoted part of the five years he professes to have spent in attention to the instrument itself, to the study of etymology. Let me beg of you, Sir, to inform him that the toy in question is properly termed *badinoire*. I think it unnecessary to waste any learning on such an ignoramus, as I doubt not but *Mr. Rotundo Magnus*, and his *badinoires*, will both sink into the oblivion they so richly merit.

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"Grammaticus."

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"Sir,

"I am a young country girl of eighteen, and have been but a few months in London; yet I have already obtained a lover. As my residence is in the City, my lover is a mercantile man. I tried for some time in vain to find out in what way of business he was amassing a fortune. For a long time I was extremely puzzled:—his conversation was so very extraordinary, that I thought Ovid's Metamorphoses were coming into fashion again. However, I have now discovered the fact myself, and have sent down to my Cousin Bridget the following question, which if you can answer, you will discover what business he is of.—What animal is that, which is sometimes a bull, sometimes a bear, and not unfrequently finishes in a lame duck?—I think Bridget will be puzzled; for I am sure such a thing was never heard of in our part of the world. I think I must marry him, if it is only to shew such a monster where no resemblance can be found.

"I am, Mr. Saunter,

"Your very humble servant,

"Sphinx."

No. XII.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1[illegible]

"Every thing by turns, and nothing long!"

IN an early Number of this paper, I warned my readers that, although I made them acquainted with the general traits of my character, yet I would not have them be surprised if other particulars became apparent in the course of our acquaintance, which they were not aware of.

The designation of humorist, which I claimed in my first paper, entitles me to the character drawn in the motto I have placed at the head of this day's recreations; and I believe I have already premised, that though I am a lineal and, I trust, not an unworthy descendant of the noble family of the Saunters, yet I had in my youth a more than

than ſufficient portion of that exertion of mind, which is apt to lead its poſſeſſor into ſtudies unbecoming a gentleman, and for which my high-ſouled progenitors ſufficiently ſnubbed me.

Whether this energy, like the camomile, grows the more luxuriantly for being trodden on, or whether it ariſes from the perverſe conformation of human nature, I cannot tell; but all the pains taken by my prudent parents, have been inſufficient to eradicate this degenerate propenſity. Even now I feel certain ſtimuli that excite at times to greater exertion both of mind and body, than ought to belong to a true and genuine Saunter.

Nor is this the firſt time in my life that I have ventured to make excurſions into the field of metaphyſics. Let not my gentle readers be alarmed. Solomon Saunter, the idler, the humoriſt, and the valetudinarian, will not lead them into all the bogs and quagmires, all the foreſts and intricate labyrinths that region affords. Nor let the ſtudent in folio turn up the lip of contempt againſt me, when I confeſs that the greater part of the knowledge I have gained, has been by an attentive peruſal of the Monthly Reviews. The man who pores over huge folios or ponderous quartos, need not deſpiſe him who gleans the moſt precious flowers of human

knowledge from the pages of a periodical pamphlet; and I run no hazard in afferting, that the volumes of the Monthly Review contain a body of elaborate criticifm, profound learning, and recondite refearch, from which any ftudent in theology, metaphyfics, or literature; any Doctor, Profeffor, F.R.S. F.S.A. or Fellow of any Society this learned age and ifland afford, might yet acquire vaft additions to his ftore of erudition.

The perufal of thefe volumes has ex... amufed me, by prefenting, as it were, at one view, the grounds and progrefs of the various literary difputes which have agitated the fraternity of authors—an agitation from which the humility of my pretenfions will ever fecure me, I truft; as nothing would be more unfuitable to the peaceable and quiet fpirit of the Saunters, than to be engaged in any literary controverfy. For, however the noble ambition of my fpirit may have been roufed, when I have perceived the innumerable treafures of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew erudition fcattered through the volumes I have mentioned, yet I confefs, when I have read the account of theological and metaphyfical difputes, I have felt the warmeft gratitude to the pious care of my mother, in preventing her precious Solomon from immerfing himfelf in the yeafty fea of philofophical refearch.

Yet

Yet I will not deny but that the ſtudy of metaphyſics is peculiarly congenial to a thinking mind. Nothing can be ſo intereſting as enquiries into the nature of that living eſſence, that ſentient principle, that conſcious identity, which is ſo intimately connected with every one of us, and about which we know ſo very little.—Perhaps, however, intereſting and curious as theſe diſcuſſions may be, they tend to very little real utility. The reſearches into the nature of the ſoul neither facilitate nor deſtroy the duties impoſed on us; nor even, however we may pretend the contrary, do the moſt ſophiſtical arguments leſſen, in the ſlighteſt degree, our conſciouſneſs that ſuch are our duties. Yet, as a mere ſpectator, it is curious and amuſing to obſerve the futile evolutions of various philoſophers, to ſee them bewildering themſelves in deep enquiries on ſubjects, which to a plain rational creature preſent no difficulties; to ſee how near the moſt bitter controverſialiſts approach to each other, and how much depends on the explanation of terms.

I have been often ſtruck with ſurpriſe, to ſee the inconſiſtencies of which the moſt erudite philoſophers can be capable—to remark how much animoſity has been raiſed, how much learning diſplayed, how much ink waſted, and how much labour employed, on ſo unimportant a ſubject as the

the explanation to be affixed to fome particular word. Nothing can be fo abitrary as thefe figns of ideas, particularly thefe figns of abftract ideas. The words *wood*, *ftone*, *brick*, *mortar*, *&c. &c.* do, indeed, appear to convey uniformly the fame meaning; but thofe combinations of letters which defcribe the abftract qualities of matter or fpirit—nay, even thofe which denote the general fpecies themfelves, are by no means fo univerfally intelligible. Yet, to a calm byftander, fuch as myfelf, for inftance, who have brought to the difcuffion no deeply-rooted ideas, no inveterate prejudices, no perfonal animofities, no particular intereft—who have laid down no fyftem, nor avowed any principle, it has more than once appeared, that the oppofite parties in thefe fpirited controverfies have approached fo near to each other, that an almoft invifible line has parted them. Yet to each difputant, this line, fo fmall, fo infignificant, fo inconfequential, has appeared full of infuperable obftacles.

No two parties can appear to differ more from each other than thofe which contend for the materiality or immateriality of the foul. Thefe terms feem alfo to involve another queftion equally abftrufe, and equally oppofed—the free-agency, or abfolute flavery of man. Thofe who contend that the foul is merely an organization of matter, muft,

of

of course, believe it bound by the laws that universally operate on matter. Hence the materialist and the necessarian are united; but it does not follow that the immaterialist and the anti-necessarian are consequently united, or the necessarian and the materialist, because Necessity, as opposed to Free-agency may have two causes—the one, the material essence of the soul, which is thereby subjected to the common laws of matter; the other, the previous will of an absolute and over-ruling power, or in one word, Predestination.

An ingenious anti-materialist, with united powers of argument and irony, contrived to subject metaphysical enquiries to mathematical demonstration, and assuming, as a data, that the soul, the sentient principle, the vivifying essence, &c. &c. &c. (for no malefactor has more *alias's* than this invisible self which every one possesses,) is merely a very curious organization of matter, it follows necessarily, that its operations are equally open to mathematical demonstration, with the operations of other modifications of matter. The Reviewers, my fountain-head of philosophy, have selected, as an example of these mathematical explanations, an instance of the power of equal and superior motives to repel and propel, which must come home to every man's bosom, namely, the carrying a letter one way for half-a-guinea a mile,

mile, and another way for a guinea a mile. The ingenious author, to whom, I believe, we may justly allow the palm of novelty for his idea of applying algebraical canons to metaphysical disquisitions, proves, by a series of demonstrations, that the effect of these two motives acting on the soul, would be to impel the man to go in a line different from either of those pointed out. Now as no man in his senses would deny but that the porter in such a case would carry the letter in that direction for which he might receive a guinea per mile, the absolute necessity he would here be under of taking a different course, seems to overturn the possibility of the system of materialism at once.

Here, however, it is objected, that even those who allow the doctrines of materialism, and consequent necessity, never deny but that the soul has in itself a principle of volition! Now what is volition but free-will? for volition, if constrained, is no longer volition! and if free-will, or volition, (give it either name) enable a man to counteract the usual laws of matter and motion, it establishes the doctrine of free-agency as opposed to materialism.

Whether the soul be composed of an indescribable and imperceptible organization of matter, or whether the breath of life be in reality a spiritual

ſpiritual eſſence, is, perhaps, an unimportant enquiry:—whether the ſoul poſſeſſes free-will, or not, is, however moſt truly important, ſince, on the principle of free-will, muſt, in a great degree, depend the whole ſyſtem of accountability. For my own part, after all the attention I have been capable of beſtowing on the ſubject, I feel convinced that I have a ſpiritual ſoul, and that my actions depend on my own volition. Beſides, in another part of that treaſury of learning which I have been ſtudying, I meet with another refutation of the ſame principle that is above applied to the guinea and half-guinea.

The ingenious Geoffry Gambado, Eſq. in one of his practical and philoſophical publications, which contain ſuch admirable inſtructions to horſemen, informs his readers that, applying the principles of mathematics, and the laws of matter and motion, to the practice of riding, he had drawn many diagrams, the reſult of which was, that when his ſteed manifeſted a deſire to proceed in any one particular direction, he oppoſed an impetus (by means of the bridle) in the immediately oppoſite direction, thinking, from philoſophical deduction, that the beaſt would take the intermediate direction, which was that previouſly fixed on by the geometrical rider. But ſound as was his theory, practice proved that the horſe

poſſeſſed

possessed a principle that militated against these deductions, and yet was not absolute free-will. The first motive that led the horse one way, was too powerfully curbed by the bridle, and the effect was a rotatory motion, which carried Geoffry Gambado, Esq. neither according to his steed's will, nor according to his own intention.—I feel, therefore, fully persuaded that my soul is not material; but further I must beg leave to remark, before I quit the subject, that even philosophers themselves are guilty of some inconsistencies. I am no philosopher—I am a plain man, who merely saunter through the labyrinths of literature, and amuse myself with tracing their different involutions.

The very men, who argue for the doctrines of materialism and consequent necessity, are among those, who, introducing and patronizing the novel philosophy of the age, become most impatient of human controul. They can bear that their actions, and thoughts, and exertions should be subjected to laws similar to those of vegetation, and equally unalterable—they can submit the intelligent principle to the rigorous despotism of absolute necessity, but they cannot submit the body politic to the wholesome controul of Government. Nay, strange as it may seem, out of the original nest of materialism and necessity, has sprung that phœnix in philosophy, the possible perfectibility of human nature.

nature. If it be so, how must we rejoice that we live in an age when such a truism is discovered! If human nature be thus perfectible, if the mode of attaining this perfection be thus discovered, what may we not expect to ensue?—Since the soul, the essence of human nature, is purely a modification of matter, and is thus capable, by its own effort, of becoming absolutely perfect, we may hope, by future well-directed efforts of this perfect soul, to see equal improvements made in all material substances, and intelligent souls conferred, by the ingenuity of perfect man, on all other organizations of matter. Man need then never be a solitary being, since, when he thoroughly understands the conformation of his own soul, he, being become thoroughly perfect, will be enabled to confer similar souls on every thing around him; and thus bare walls, and chairs, and tables, not merely "vocal groves and whispering streams," will supply to him the place of company. Then will be realized the delightful visionary philosophy of the American Indians, so beautifully depicted by my predecessor, the Spectator, in the story of Marraton and Yaratilda. This tale, which I have hitherto looked upon merely as an agreeable fiction, as a fanciful display of the writer's playful invention, I shall henceforth consider as a prophetical description of the future state of human society on earth. By whatever power the mind of

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the Spectator was inspired with this prophetical account, it is plain that he was not worthy to understand it, since I believe his soul was not organized with sufficient dexterity to enable him to perceive the sublime truths developed by the philosophy of the present age.

As I am tired of metaphysics, and most probably have tired my readers too, I shall fill up my paper with the following letter.

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

"Sir,

"When I consider my age, which is turned of thirty-six, I fear I must enrol myself in the honourable sisterhood of old maids, otherwise I should be at a loss by what denomination to call myself, for my life is as multifarious as imagination can well conceive. At times, I am a fine lady, living in all the irksome routine of fashionable life; yet at intervals I steal away, to walk through the dirty streets, or miry lanes, and forget all the slavery of the world in the enjoyment of liberty. Sometimes my occupations suddenly change from music to mending stockings, from painting

painting to mantua-making: all day perhaps I am employed in teaching A B C, and at night writing poetry, or ſtudying philoſophy. My head is a perfect farrago of literature and economy—my attention veering between the ſtudy of metaphyſics, and the carving a leg of mutton. Sometimes picking ſhells and drying weeds—at others, planning tragedies and epic poems; at one period, harneſſing all my thoughts and expreſſions to the car of etiquette—at another, ſporting in all the fanciful mazes of playful converſation: yet even at my age and with all theſe varieties about me, finding ſome intervals to admit the approaches of the ſofter paſſion!—Do you know, Mr. Saunter, I am at this moment deſperately in love! I ſpend my hours in contriving methods to inform my beloved of my paſſion. I bewilder my imagination in vain. Oh Mr. Saunter! ſpare the confuſion of a female, and allow me in one word to ſign myſelf

“ Your

“ AMORANDA.”

No. XIII

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1799.

DISPOSED as I am to admire the progreffive fuperiority of my cotemporaries over the laft age, there is nothing in which we difplay it more than in the care we take to make the rifing generation as fuperior to ourfelves. The education of children is now fo fafhionable, fo prevailing a topic, that even an idle man may be permitted to take fome intereft in it, particularly when he only obferves to admire and applaud.

I own I have felt fome regret at the adoption of fome plans very different from thofe that prevailed when I was young; but that regret was felfifh, or rather arofe from piqued vanity and difappointed pride. I have already confeffed that, in

in my childhood, I was noted for a love of reading, and a retentive memory; and theſe two circumſtances ſtood me in ſuch good ſtead, that to the race immediately ſucceeding my own, I was a very deſirable companion. Admirably ſkilled in all that profuſion of fabulous hiſtory, in which youthful imaginations ſo delighted to wander, I have convulſed many a circle with delight, by relating the wonderful adventures of Prince Lupin, or the ſingular transformation of the Royal Ram. I had tales of a ſuperior caſt for larger children, as I was perfectly acquainted with the delightful works of the Counteſs D'Anois, and thoſe ſublime efforts of Eaſtern genius, the Arabian Nights Entertainments. The Little Hunchbacked Barber of Bagdad, or the Voyages of Sindbad, the Sailor, have from my lips been the protracted amuſement of many evenings.

I own I regret to have loſt my importance in the little world; and for a time was inclined to rebel againſt that decree of the magician, Faſhion, which excluded my young friends from any introduction into that ideal world.—"Alas!" I exclaimed, "in a few years more, Cinderella will live only in the 'Loves of the Triangles,' and Blue Beard will only be underſtood by thoſe who have grey beards of their own."—But I confeſs

this to have ariſen from malevolence and pique: I was hurt to find the infants of the preſent age taught the firſt principles of philoſophy in the nurſery; and was for ſome time ſo prejudiced, that I doubted the vivacity of the pleaſure with which the little beings peruſed lectures on botany, chemiſtry, or the fuſion of metals. But I retract the unworthy envy which had ſeized my boſom, and can now look, with a pure and generous delight, on a knot of young philoſophers, ſtudying, from marble-covered books, the Rights of Man, the Tyranny of Kings, the Injuſtice of War, and the Miſconduct of Miniſters. I can pay the due tribute of praiſe to thoſe ſublime geniuſſes who have employed talents ſo ſuperior in adapting theſe ſubjects to the comprehenſion of children of ſeven years old. I can no longer doubt the delight with which an infant botaniſt ſits down to read a diſſertation of thirty or forty pages on the ſtructure of umbelliferous plants, or the uſes and virtues of leguminous ones.

Surely it never can be too early to ſow good ſeeds in the mind, nor can they ever take ſuch deep root as in early childhood. Why ſhould we wait till claſſical learning teaches our ſixth-form boys to appreciate properly the value of public ſpirit, true patriotiſm, and dear-bought liberty? Why ſhould we truſt that the Hiſtoric Muſe would

ſufficiently

ſufficiently open their eyes to the merits of the Hermodias's and Ariſtodemus's of every minor commonwealth in Greece, not one of which wanted ſpirit to reſiſt the encroachment of magiſtrates, or the fetters of law? Why ſhould we expoſe the riſing generation to the danger of ſo fatal a miſtake, as that quiet ſubmiſſion to exiſting government is the duty of a Chriſtian? Why ſhould they not be early taught that thoſe actions which the deſpotiſm of Monarchs terms *Rebellion*, are only proper and ſpirited exertions of the natural liberty of mankind againſt the abuſe of power?—We take great pains to explain the ſpecific meaning of words in a literary view, why then ſuffer them to remain dubious, or worſe than dubious, in a philoſophical one? What terrible principles were inculcated in the former ſtudies put into the hands of youth! I wonder that even the acknowledged liberality of my mind ever enabled me to ſurmount the cloud of prejudices my darling books raiſed around me. In all the fairy tales I remember, Royal Families were patterns of every excellence; and though now and then a monſter did intrude, it was always in the ſhape of a ſtepmother, or daughter-in-law, not in a direct and lineal branch of the illuſtrious tree. But, alas! theſe books repreſented things as they ought to be, not as they are; and it was cruel to preſent to the view of youth enchanted pictures of

 golden

golden days, whoſe ſpell muſt be ſo ſuddenly broken when they come to view the world as it is! No, though I cannot but regret the illuſion, I allow the neceſſity of holding things up to the eyes of the riſing race in a more unſophiſticated light; and I hope to ſee the time when all their amuſements will be equally philoſophical—when the unmeaning exertions of Harlequin will be baniſhed for the well-directed efforts of Baron Trenck, and when the dogmatic philoſophy of the old ſchool will give way to the inſpired ſapience of the German Literati—when a puppet-ſhew, inſtead of repreſenting Punch and his Wife, attended by the Baker and the Devil, will ſhew, in the moſt lively and natural manner, the mode of conducting executions in France, and the ſolemn deliberations of the National Aſſembly: the Preſident's bell would, I think, have an excellent effect, and I recommend the hint to all ingenious artiſts in wood and wire.

Rouſſeau, that viſionary philoſopher, laid it down as a grand principle in education, to keep the mind free as long as poſſible from any ſtrong biaſſes; but he, though a great man, had not ſufficient energy to diſcover the immeaſurable advantage of implanting right principles ſo early. He ſaw plainly enough, that wrong ones were, in general, rooted ſo firmly, that it was difficult for the

the subsequent efforts of philosophy to eradicate them; but he could not hope that parents and guardians would coincide in the liberal and public-spirited task of setting the affairs of this world in a true light to their infant charges.

What a nation of philosophers and statesmen shall we not hereafter be! No deep researches into books of jurisprudence will now be necessary to give our future young counsellors an idea of law:—all these studies will be begun in first principles in the nursery; and how easy will it be for minds thus early accustomed to make philosophical deductions, to carry those principles into general effect!

Nor, while the vigour and early energy of the mental powers are thus attended to, are the external and alluring graces neglected. Many indeed, who do not so liberally recur to philosophical first principles, are generous to an extreme in their provision for the other half of education. Generally speaking, however, these two branches go hand in hand; and while the trivial histories of the Seven Sleepers, and Prince Riquet with the Tuft, are exchanged for far more amusing dissertations on Chemistry, or lectures on Mineralogy, those important exercises, which used to be thoughtlessly consigned to the play hours,

and

and variable wills of children, are now very properly put into the hands of professors of those liberal arts.

The use of the skipping-rope, formerly left to the caprice of those playful little beings, is now scientifically taught at boarding-schools; and I hope to see the time when the noble art of kite-flying shall arrive at a distinction equally well deserved. Although boys have, from time immemorial, usurped the exclusive privilege of the first-mentioned exercise, the present age has nobly dared to dispute the monopoly, and has extended the use of the skipping-rope to female candidates. Doubtless this, amongst other equally valuable immunities, have been obtained for that degraded and ill-treated half of humankind, by that excellent book, "the Rights of Women!"—Indeed, the professors of this art chiefly confine their instructions to seminaries of females.

Another extension of rights, bestowed on girls in this liberal and philosophical age, is the liberty of imitating those airs and attitudes which render the Indian dancing girls so irresistible. Why should charms so attractive be denied to beings who want so little to make them angelic? Thus, while metaphysics and science contend for the honour of enlarging their minds, one professor

professor initiates them into the gymnasia of the Spartans, and another teaches them the voluptuous and alluring attitudes of Eastern Houries; and that they may obtain these graces more accurately, the instructor usually preferred for this purpose, is himself a *Black*—another instance of prejudices conquered in this enlightened period. The very beings who were formerly considered as so much our inferiors in every power of intellect, are now entrusted with the most important of all possible tasks, that of giving the last polish to the education of those divinities who are going forth to fetter mankind.

I have been led into these remarks by a letter I received the other day from a worthy and well-meaning gentleman, who is desirous of doing every thing that is laudable in a circumstance of so much importance. I will lay his own words before my readers, that those who are unfortunately as ignorant as himself, may adopt as judicious a mode of obviating the bad consequences of their want of knowledge.

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

« Sir,

« I look upon my case to be a particularly hard one, and I take the liberty of writing

writing to you, Sir, to beg to know whether I have acted prudently, confidering the dilemma I was in.—My ftory, Sir, is fimply this. I am a country Squire of the county of——, and have been married fifteen years to a woman who feemed well contented to fhare my fortune, fuch as it was, and it was, Mr. Saunter, very moderate. We had two daughters; and as our families were both of them refpected in the county, I was willing my girls fhould have gentility enough for their relations not to be afhamed of them. They therefore went to an evening fchool, where they learned to read, write, and cypher; and at their mother's repeated requeft, in which, I muft fay, my girls joined with no fmall earneftnefs, I gave them each a quarter's dancing. The death of a coufin made a fmall addition to my income; the dancing was continued under a new mafter, and at length a little mufic was fqueezed from me. I confefs I was not difpleafed to hear Letty, who has really a good clear voice, fing "Llango-lee," while her fifter Fanny accompanied her, as they call it, on the piano-forte; and as I found the mornings were regularly given to what I thought more neceffary employments, I was contented that they fhould fool away the evenings as they pleafed.

"My girls were certainly very well looked upon by the neighbourhood, and would, I dare fay,

in time have married as good men as their father, had it not pleased Heaven in its anger (I never could tell for what, except suffering Lett and Fann to learn music), to take from this sinful world an old uncle of mine, who left me heir to an estate of five thousand pounds a year, as unexpectedly as, I am sure, it was unwished on my part. What had I, with my humble and contented habits, to do with five thousand pounds a year? This event, however, caused a great revolution in the minds of the female part of my family. Poor old Deb, my wife, instantly began to talk of the necessity of living like ourselves, and this necessity, Mr. Saunter, has made us all unlike ourselves ever since.

"I am a good-natured man, though not an henpecked one; and to preserve the peace and tranquillity of my family, I consented to come to London. Here I found that all the education I had given my girls would go for nothing. My wife made an acquaintance with Mrs. Modish, whose husband has not more income than I have, and who has five daughters, all younger than my Letty. The accomplishments of the Miss Modishes were continually extolled before me, and at last I was persuaded to pay a morning visit.

How

"How shall I describe it, Mr. Saunter? I was shewn into a room, decorated with festoons of coloured paper and artificial flowers, with ornaments for lamps, and a number of gewgaws, of which I neither knew the names nor the uses; while every pane of glass was filled up with coloured drawings, some representing moonlight, some sunsets, some fire pieces, which I own were pretty enough, only that the whole room looked like a show-box. When Mrs. Modish informed me that all these ornaments were not only the work, but the taste, of her daughters, and that this room was thus finished for a ball which she was to give in a few days, for which her daughters were going that morning to practise dances, my wife on this whispered in my ear, when would our bumpkins do as much? and then aloud entreated Mrs. Modish to permit us to see the young ladies take their lessons.

Mrs. Modish, who piques herself on being an excellent mother, was flattered by this request; and the Miss Modishes, to beguile the time till the dancing-master came, gave us some music, which Deb assured me was enchanting, and to which my daughters listened with envy. They were invited to play, but they refused, with a sullen consciousness of their inferiority. Soon, however,

however, one of the dancing-maſters came, and the girls performed ſome lively Scotch and Iriſh ſteps that ſeemed naturally enough ſuited to their age; and they looked ſo gay and happy, and friſked ſo prettily to the time, that I own I was pleaſed with this exhibition, and took the maſter's card of addreſs.

"He was followed by a Frenchman, a tall ſturdy fellow, with more the gait and make of an Iriſhman, than Frenchmen ever poſſeſſed till they enjoyed liberty, or at leaſt, than we would ever allow that they poſſeſſed. I had heard much of French dancing, and expected to be now very highly gratified; but I was ſhocked to ſee how familiarly he pawed the girls about:—fine girls, Mr. Saunter!—the elder advancing faſt to womanhood; and he thought himſelf obliged to fix not only their arms and ſhoulders, but their waiſts and heads with his own unhallowed hands. And at laſt, deſiring that they might ſtand on one leg, becauſe they did not balance with the ſtrength and firmneſs he thought neceſſary, he took hold of the leg that was to be lifted up, and fixed it in a proper attitude. I own I could have boxed the fellow's ears!

"This leſſon over, a Black arrived, to give the ladies

ladies their leſſons on the tambourine; and as his time was precious, Mrs. Modiſh begged us to remain quiet. Here was more attitudinizing, Mr. Saunter, and my blood once more began to boil.

"However, to make ſhort of my ſtory, I exclaimed againſt the Frenchman and the Black; but I was taught my error, and aſſured that theſe faſhionable inſtructors were abſolutely neceſſary—nay, that my girls, who in the country could run a[illegible]lf a dozen miles in a mor[illegible]g, did not abſolutely know how to ſet one foot before another, and poſitively required a drill ſerjeant. I was obſtinate for ſome time, but on enquiring farther, every body ſpoke of Mrs. Modiſh as a pattern for mothers, and of theſe gentlemen as abſolutely neceſſary to all young ladies.

[illegible]hat could a peaceable man do, Mr. Saunter? I was not willing my girls ſhould appear like awkward dowdies, when I knew they were as well-formed and as active girls as any of the Miſſes that made a finer figure. I put them under the orders of Mrs. Modiſh, and my wife now boaſts that her daughters have not half-an-hour in a week unoccupied by one leſſon or other. I think, indeed, I perceive that Letty begins to loſe

lose her fine fresh colour; but my wife seems to rejoice in proportion as I grieve, for she says she now looks less like a country bumpkin.

"I am, Mr. Saunter,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"RALPH RUSTIC."

No. XIV.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1799.

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

"Sir,

"IT is my fortune to be pretty nearly connected with a woman who thinks it her duty, and makes it a point of conscience, I believe,

believe, to fet every body about her to rights by dint of argument, or rather, haranguing! To the name of argument, to be fure, that fpecies of oratory can lay no claim, which fets all logical rules at defiance, and turns and twifts the plaineft truths about fo ftrangely, that no one can decide at the conclufion, what had been the original data.

"Eudoxa,—thank Heaven fhe is not my wife!—has the keeneft perception for the errors of others of any one I ever met with in my life. None of her acquaintance ever do any thing precifely as they ought to do, and indeed it would be a pity they fhould; for any deviation from the rule of wrong, fo glorioufly adhered to by all of whom fhe has any knowledge, would deprive her of an opportunity of exercifing her lungs, and difcharging much peccant matter. I am fometimes aftonifhed at her ingenuity in fpinning out a lecture of an hour, in enumerating all the mifchief that may arife from any action fhe may chufe to condemn; though, to be fure, fhe contrives to lengthen it by introducing the mode of acting her fuperior fagacity would have pointed out. A difference of opinion in the mereft trifle will call forth a vindication of her judgment, that fhall make your head and heart ache for your precipitancy in involving yourfelf in fuch a hobble; and

and if, tired of the difcuffion, you give a filent affent, or gracioufly avow your relinquifhment, even then Eudoxa is not contented, but will go over the whole ground again, and prove to you that you have not yielded from politenefs alone, but from the fulleft conviction of your error.

« It is fometimes impoffible to avoid fmiling, to obferve with what eafe fhe arranges all the affairs of others, and how light fhe makes of any perplexity in which they may be involved, merely to fhew how very fuperior her difcernment is to their's, and with what facility fhe fhould extricate herfelf from the dilemma in which others are bewildered. The diftreffes, the occupations of others appear very unimportant to her; fhe thinks it exceffively childifh in her friends to care fo ferioufly about things of fo little confequence; while every thing, however infignificant, that occurs to herfelf, calls forth all the volubility of her reafoning powers, and is a new tax on the furprife of her hearers at the different light in which things appear as they touch herfelf or her friends.

« I am a quiet man, Mr. Saunter, and do not love to enter into thefe long difcuffions: I therefore often carelefly utter an affent to opinions

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in themselves indifferent, and sometimes so very inadvertently, that, in order to avoid worse consequences, I acquiesce in things I scarcely hear, or do not in my own mind agree with: but this is a dangerous security. Eudoxa will not forget, though I do, that I had been of her opinion in such and such things, and if any thing similar recurs at a future period, however distant, she will appeal to me as her certain support; and if I profess my ignorance, she will recal the circumstance to my memory by a thousand minute occurrences, and at last squeeze from my peevish impatience another assent to be again remembered, to plague me at some distant time.

" Oh! how my heart aches to hear her displaying her own wisdom in the management of trifles which a girl of twelve years old could arrange—to find all the conversation taken up in minute and fatiguing discussions of points of the greatest clearness, or in deep discoveries of the errors of others! But I myself shall, in the petulance of my anger, fall into the very error I am arraigning, if I continue any longer inveighing against Eudoxa. I will therefore hasten to subscribe myself,

" Sir,

" Your very humble servant,

" PHILOPAX."

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

" Sir,

" The reading of Hiftory is always looked upon to be one of the propereft ftudies for young people; but though, when I was young myfelf, I took infinite pleafure in poring over Grecian and Roman annals, and was well acquainted with every name of confequence recorded by the Hiftoric Mufe, yet I own that, from fome obfervations I have made on the nature of Hiftory, I begin to abate much of my refpect both for the heroes themfelves, and the recorders of their deeds.

" The falfe grounds on which we have been taught to admire heroifm, have, indeed, been held forth to view by a very ingenious predeceffor of your's (the Adventurer), and are in many books of later date expofed to abhorrence on other principles. I do not perhaps fo fully coincide with the more modern compofitions on the fubject, becaufe they ftill give the term to deeds of war and hardihood; only they require that they fhall be directed againft the exifting Government, be that what it may. Now, for my part, Mr. Saunter, I look upon heroifm as it is called, and deeds of war and hardihood,

hardihood, not to be, in any view, the proper occupation, or the proper praiſe of man. He was certainly not placed in this world to deſtroy, but to increaſe, his ſpecies; and if he performs the latter duty in one place, and goes forth to reap laurels of deſtruction in another, it reminds me of an old proverb, to wit—"Robbing Peter to pay Paul."

"I do not, however, expect that from this my el[illegible]entation, wars ſhall be made to ceaſe in all the world; but I own I do reprobate the putting into children's hands ſuch books as repreſent deeds of murder as alone praiſeworthy, and heighten the admiration in proportion to the miſchief done. Nor are the actions recorded in Hiſtory, even were they modelled on the principles which ought now to direct the actions of men, of a nature to afford inſtruction to a tenth part of thoſe who ſpend their youth in attaining a knowledge of them. The conduct of Princes, the ambition of warriors, the toils of lawgivers, the operations of States, are ſurely objects of very remote intereſt to the man who reſides on his own eſtate, or to the perſon who carries on merchandize even to any extent.

"Nor is it on theſe grounds alone that I build my diſreſpect for Hiſtory. It cannot eſcape any

man

man of obfervation, how thoroughly private interefts of one kind or other pervade every relation of every fact. How feldom, even in the moft common and every-day matters, you hear the fame incident told twice alike, and yet but one account can be true! We know too how partial hiftorical writers muft be on account of the different political principles they have adopted, and how the fame perfon is an angel or a devil according to the fide the hiftorian has taken in the parties of the country. Nay, when we obferve how many things are mifreprefented where no jarring paffion can interfere, where mere mifconception alone can caufe the mifreprefentation, we fhall learn to be very incredulous of the truth of thofe recitals, of which the [illegible] can have had no perfonal knowledge. How little faith can we give to the beft attefted hiftorical facts, when in the common daily occurrences, people reprefent the fame fact fo diverfely! Every one muft recollect numerous inftances of the kind I allude to—every one muft remember to have heard ftories and circumftances told in a manner very different from the truth, by people who had no intention to falfify.

"Where perfonal intereft can in any way interfere, one can account for a little deviation. The relator may be inclined to glofs over particular

particular ſhades of a circumſtance in any very diſtant degree affecting himſelf; but in matters of abſolute indifferency, what can occaſion it? I remember being in a carriage with two other people, at a time when the fields near London were under water, in conſequence of ſome very heavy rains. One of my companions obſerved what a ſtate the country was in, for he ſaw boats actually at that moment on the fields: this was a plain matter of fact. The other gentleman and myſelf looked as directed;—we ſaw what the firſt had taken for a boat, and plainly diſcerned that it was none. We endeavoured to undeceive him, but in vain. He continued to aſſert that he had ſeen boats; and at ſome diſtance of time, this man, remembering the impreſſion made on him, may relate the circumſtance as witneſſed by himſelf; and as he is a man of undoubted veracity, and not likely to be warped by paſſion or prejudice (though indeed there is nothing in the fact itſelf to give riſe to either), the circumſtance may paſs into the chronicles of the age, that in the year 17— the lands near London were ſo much overflowed, that the inhabitants were obliged to paſs and repaſs in boats.—This is a trifling inſtance; but if, in an event ſo unimportant, error ſo eaſily obtains a place, how much more is it to be ſuſpected where Paſſion and Prejudice, the great foes to Truth, can exert their unlimited ſway?

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"In forming the judgment, facts thus liable to be misrepresented, deserve very little trust; and when we reflect how much less we can depend on the record of motives, and characters, the only parts of History that can come home to the breast of any man, perhaps History will lose a little of the blind reverence so often paid to it, and the instructors of our youth will think the study of the human heart, the science of ethics, more generally useful, than a perverted or mistaken record of facts, in which their pupils have so little real interest.

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"CRITO."

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"I am, Mr. Saunter, in the opinion of the young, an old man; but I am not yet so old as to have lost all the feelings which afforded so much exquisite pleasure to my youth. I lead, however, rather a solitary life,—a life which has apparently undergone as few alterations as that of any human being. I have reached the age of forty-eight, and have

have continued to live in the fame houfe in which I eftablifhed myfelf on firft quitting the paternal roof: this was at the age of two-and-twenty. I never married, and have purfued the fame routine of bufinefs by which I firft endeavoured to procure myfelf a competency. Above a competency my wifhes never foared, nor have I, in the courfe of twenty-fix years, obtained more. I am now, indeed, enabled to enjoy fome intervals of leifure, which, however, I always included in my idea of neceffaries.

"Such a life as mine, Mr. Saunter, marked only by the common daily occurrences, feems hardly one ftep above mere vegetation; and but for the habit of reflection, would have paffed like an arrow through the fky, and have left no trace upon my brain. No great events have occurred to me; I have obtained no wife, reared no family, built no houfe, written no book. I have never travelled twenty miles beyond the town of my refidence, nor ever rode a fox-chace. Time appears to have ftood ftill with me. I ftill folace my lonely evenings with the few airs I learned on the flute when a boy; my hat hangs on the fame peg, and my ftick occupies the fame corner I allotted to them when firft I inhabited my houfe. The neighbours affirm, and my glafs confirms the affertion, that I look precifely as I always did;

did; and indeed my orders to my tailor are always thus laconically expreffed—"A fuit juft like the laft."

"I fee others changing around me, but I remain apparently the fame; yet the other evening, as I fat mufing, during the hour of twilight, on the apparent famenefs of my life, I could not but feel confcious myfelf of many changes, important to me, though unobferved by others. The continual courfe of fmall events has altered to my perception the whole face of the fcene around me; and though, at firft view, I fhould perhaps pronounce my fituation precifely what it was, yet when I recal to mind the little incidents of my earlier years, I am convinced that Time has not ftood ftill, nor deferted that daily labour, by which he varies the form of every thing below. He has not indeed left fuch deep traces behind him with me as he has with many of my friends; but in the filent tenor of my years, the flight furrows he has made are fully evident to me.

"When firft I fettled in my prefent habitation, Mr. Saun[illegible]e houfe under the hill was the refidence of my deareft friend. He called my plan of life a rational one, and we refolved to purfue it together. Circumftances, however, determined otherwife for him: the intereft of his friends

friends procured him a lucrative appointment in India, and he went to take advantage of it. He told me he accepted it, only as it would accelerate his plan of *modest independence, and literary leisure*,—that he looked forward with eager hope to the period when he should again inhabit that lowly white cottage, for such it then was, and return to the pursuits we followed with ardour together. But the modest independence of a literary youth differed widely from the idea the same words conveyed to his mind after a few years' residence in India. His modest independence has converted the lowly white cottage into a palace; his literary ardour has enabled him to fit up a magnificent library; and I can see, in the expressions of reg[illegible] friendship calls forth from him, a sort of repressed pity of the inferiority of my mind.

"Others, with whom I associated in my youth, are no more! more are married, and settled in or near London. The houses where I was formerly received with kindness and hospitality, are now inhabited by a race of beings very different from those whom I loved, and who [illegible]. All who could afford it, all who had cultivated minds, have gone into the neighbourhood of your metropolis; and I, who, from the power of habit, am unable now to change, am condemned to feel the effects

of the viciffitudes of life, without having put myfelf in the way of their benefits.

" Vain is the hope to remain the fame in a world where every thing is changing around you. Down the ftream of time we muft fail with the reft; and though the diftant boundaries of the profpect continue fo long the fame, that we perfuade ourfelves we have not moved from the fpot whence we embarked, we fhall obferve the nearer objects gradually altering, and at laft even the fpiral mountain or the dark foreft that had fo long marked the horizon, are gone from our view, and we find ourfelves in a fituation very different indeed from that whence we firft fet out.

" I am, Mr. Saunter,

" Your very humble fervant,

" AGRESTIS."

No. XV.

No. XV.

Thursday, January 2, 1800.

MY readers may perhaps recollect that in my eighth Number, I preſented them with a converſation criticiſm on the popular compoſition of Peter Piper, in which my friend's nephew, a youth of very promiſing abilities, threw out an idea that the piece in queſtion, inſtead of being poetical, was wholly logical.—I muſt do the young man the juſtice to ſay that his arguments were very ingenious, and at the ſame time were delivered with very becoming modeſty; and according to the promiſe given at the cloſe of the above-mentioned paper, I here preſent my readers with the young gentleman's oration.

"It is with good and ſufficient reaſon," ſaid my friend's nephew, preſſing the table with the fore-finger of his right hand, "it is with good and

and ſufficient reaſon that the dialecticians of ancient times aſſimilated logic to a cloſed and firmly compacted hand. If the juſtneſs of the compariſon," continued he, "be once admitted, (which I imagine can ſcarcely be denied), I will then fearleſſly take upon myſelf to ſay, that no propoſition in Euclid ever more reſembled the clenchedneſs of the fiſt, than that upon which it is now my duty to dilate.

"Gentlemen, you well know that, amongſt the arts practiſed by the rhetoricians of Greece and Rome, it was not unuſual for a pai[illegible], illuſtrating the facts which it was the buſineſs of the ſpeaker to explain, to be produced before thoſe to whom he ſpoke, [illegible] conveyed to the eye, which could not be ſo powerfully impreſſed upon the underſtanding. It is not for me upon this occaſion to act the rhetorician—my part is ſolely that of the logician. Were it, however, allowable for me to be ſo, were it allowable for me for one moment ſo to do, I flatter myſelf that, by ſhewing y[illegible]ly a written copy of that, of which it is my fortune now to ſpeak, I ſho[illegible] evince the truth of my aſſertion. Attend, gentlemen—

Peter Piper pick'd a peck of pepper.

"Nothing, nothing can be found more to

reſemble

refemble a clenched fi[illegible] in external appearance; not even 1, 2, 3, [illegible] 6, 7, 8, 9 would more refemble it:—yet thefe, it is well known, are more decidedly the figns of fixed and well-determined ideas, than words, the fenfe of which is frequently vague, and always arbitrary. Gentlemen, it is in vain that an attempt has been made to miflead the judgment, by confidering thefe memorable lines as tricked out with the delufive charms of eloquence: for my part, it feems to me fcarcely poffible more fairly and plainly to addrefs the mind than by the prefent words. There is in them nothing gorgeous, nothing periphraftic; they relate a plain fact in plain terms—the fact is fimply the picking of a peck of pepper. [illegible] peck of pepper was picked, furely fome one muft have picked it,—a peck of pepper picks not itfelf. Who then picked it?—Plainly, Peter Piper. In this there is nothing but what is abfolutely neceffary for the elucidation of this important truth. A peck of pepper is picked—Who picked it?—Not *John* Piper, nor *Thomas* Piper, but plainly *Peter* Piper.

Where's the peck of pepp[illegible]r pick'd?

"Still reafoning—ftill logical.—The middle term is indeed omitted; but what man does not at once perceive the nature of its fyllogiftic form? What

What mind [illegible] that if a peck of pepper once be picke[illegible] have been picked, it muſt have *been*, and to have *been*, it muſt have had *place* to be in? *Where* is it then? Here, here indeed, and here alone is diſplayed ſome eloquence. To the queſtion Where? no anſwer is returned. Where is it?—Gone!—No one is able to ſay whither! Gone, deſtroyed, hidden, periſhed? Gone, like the ſhips burned by Ruſſia!—Gentlemen, it was once ſaid by a learned Serjeant who practiſed in another Court than thoſe of Weſtminſter, (the learned Serjeant Kite), that the word Demonſtration came from Demon, the Father of Lies. With that perſonage probably remains the peck of pepper, and with you, gentlemen, I truſt, remains a [illegible] of the logical ſkill demonſtrated in this celebrated effort."

Thus ended the argument of my friend's nephew; and as for my friend and myſelf, whatever we thought on the ſubject, we ſaid no more, for ſince the youth had ſo fairly ſent the peck of pepper to the devil, we feared, if we continued the debate any [illegible], he might be for ſending us after it.

Here then, cloſing the ſubject, I ſhall preſent my readers with a ſimple tale, a true one, which, if they will not allow to be poetry, they may

amuſe themſelves, after the young gentleman's example, with proving to be logic.

THE GAMEKEEPER'S TALE

Sweet was the morn, and lovely. 'Twas the time
When many-tinted Autumn, with light hand,
Had thrown her various veſt o'er vale and grove,
And to the half-deſpoiled trees had given
A ſoberer, ſofter charm than Spring beſtows;
A charm far dearer to the feeling mind,
Than all the gaudy hues which Summer ſuns
Shed with profuſion round us.—Not a breeze
Diſturb'd the ſurface of the calm clear lake:
The ſky unclouded, yet not brilliant, ſhone,
Its fair blue veil'd with an autumnal haze.
The ſun himſelf, in chaſten'd harmony
With the repoſing ſtillneſs of the morn,
Soften'd the ſplendour of his burning beam.
Then forth we ſtroll'd in meditative mood,
Each feeling tun'd to peace; and as we gaz'd
On every pleaſing object ſcatter'd round,
Each turn'd on each a friendly cordial eye,
That more than language ſpoke our inmoſt thoughts.

Diſcourſe,

Discourse, that sweetest privilege of man,
Would now have marr'd our pleasure; for our hearts,
Too full for utterance, felt a pure delight
The worldling never knows: and in that pause
Of all expression, did we deep imbibe
The very spirit of the soothing scene.

Thus in congenial temper on we stroll'd
A time unnoted. Each in his own mind
Feeding creative Fancy with new stores
Of loveliest images, nor heeding once
The tangling briars, or rough impediments
Of broken ground, or trees but newly fell'd,
Till to that pastoral stream that murmurs thro'
The depths of spring-wood, all at once we came,
Where neither plank, nor tree (the rustic bridge)
Appear'd to aid us.—Stopp'd thus suddenly,
By this (indeed) impassable barrier,
Quick met the mutual glance of gay surprise,
And now disturb'd the current of our thoughts,
Which thus had led us, heedless of our way,
Thro' devious paths, perplex'd, with minds absorb'd
In their own fair conceptions.—Down we sate
Upon the mossy bank of that fair stream,
And, much amus'd, join'd in a cordial laugh
At our abstracted fancies. Then we fell
Into most sweet discourse; in vacant mood,

Now ſerious, and now ſportive, unreſtrain'd,
Diſcuſs'd all ſubjects; or with idle hand
Pluck'd the ſmall weed, Nature's trim workmanſhip,
With which, in her moſt ſtill and leiſure hour,
She had adorn'd that bank. With curious ken
We view'd the various moſſes, and the heaths,
The humble ſiſters of that ſtately tribe
Named Erica, the gardener's pride and grief;
Or caught the woodlark's note, or ſoothing tone
Of melancholy ſtockdove, and enjoy'd
An hour more worth than many a common life.

Here, as we reſted, ſuddenly we heard
From the receſſes of that lonely wood,
A quick report, as of a diſtant gun,
And the ſhrill yelp of pointer, following cloſe,
Beſpoke the ſhot ſucceſsful.—Keen reproach
Flaſh'd from our eyes, and with injurious words
We had begun to quarrel with our kind
For thus invading the delightful haunts
Of Nature's commoners, but that a ſhriek,
Long, loud, and dire, inſtant aſſail'd our ears;
And by one ſudden feeling both impell'd,
Swift thro' the tangling underwood we ran,
And reach'd the ſpot, breathleſs.—When there, we ſaw
A man in tatter'd garments, ſcarcely clad,
And at his feet the yelping pointer lay.

No gun had he—no instrument of death—
Nor saw we any cause for that dire yell—
Not even a murder'd bird lay on the ground :—
But at a distance stood with folded arms
Another man of countenance severe.
Anon, the ragged man, whose face was pale
And squalid as the victim of disease,
Renew'd that dreadful scream; then on the ground
He threw his meagre carcase, and with blows
Redoubled, beat his breast, and shrivell'd limbs!
The paroxysm over, he arose,
And meekly joining that stern man, with sighs,
With feeble steps, and oft reverted eye,
Quitted the spot in quiet!

Then we turn'd
Heartsick away, and silent now indeed;
But with far different feelings, on we went.—
Our silence now was of that dreadful kind
That shudders to be broken.—What strange thoughts
Pass'd in our minds, I will not say—nor tell
How pale our cheeks, how wildly glar'd our eyes!
Those lovely images displac'd and lost
That grac'd our morning's vacancy, as when
The huge stone ruffles the reposing lake.
With minds disturb'd we walk'd, and hurried step,
And as we gain'd that most frequented path,

That from the village leads acroſs the wood,
We met the paſtor of our rural fane.
Eager, yet fearfully, we aſk'd the cauſe
Of that ſtrange ſcene. At once the good old man
(Methinks I ſee him now) ſhook his white locks,
Put off the natural ſmile that grac'd his age,
And with ſad voice, and feeling ſighs, reply'd—
" 'Tis a ſtrange tale, a ſad one! by my troth,
" Tho' now a twelvemonth is gone by, I feel
" Whene'er I think on't, as but yeſterday
" The dread event had chanc'd.—That man you ſaw,
" Had a kind heart, a warm one, and in truth,
" 'Twas more refin'd than penury and toil
" Can well permit a peaſant's heart to be.
" He had a wife—he had three ſmiling babes,
" And a low cot, the manſion of content.
" Oft have I ſaid—' Let thoſe who wiſh to view
' What happineſs on earth can be, look there,
' For there it ſurely dwells.'—Still with the lark
" Riſing to patient labour, with the lark
" He caroll'd his blithe ſongs; and when at eve
" The weſtering ſun call'd home the early bird,
" He alſo ſought his confort and his neſt.
" At length,—it ſo pleas'd Heaven,—his eldeſt boy,
" Conſumptive, died! and after him the girl,
" His ſecond hope! and in a little while
" His wife ſhew'd ſymptoms of the dire diſeaſe!

" She knew too well th' infidious enemy
" That, falfely fmiling, faps the fprings of life;
" But ftill conceal'd her painful certainty,
" And let him feed on hope.—At length the truth
" No art could veil; and then with t[illegible] tears,
" And feebly preffing his cold trembling [illegible]
" She fondly, to his own peculiar care,
" With folemn energy confign'd the boy,
" Her fole furviving child! The husband wept,
" The father trembled;—yet he clafp'd his wife,
" And gave the facred promife fhe defir'd,
" That ever in his fight fhould live the boy.
" Peaceful fhe now departed! and in time,
" So Heaven directs, the bleeding wound was ftanch'd,
" And he could turn to induftry again.
" But, weaken'd by his forrow, former toil
" O'ercame his fhatter'd frame;—and tho' with grief,
" Yet for a livelihood, he undertook
" A gamekeeper's employ. But mindful ftill
" Of that firm promife to his dying wife,
" Made fo religioufly, he kept the child
" Still in his fight;—and when to field or wood
" His bufinefs led him, ftill the fportive child,
" Clofe as his pointer, follow'd at his heels.
" One day, when long fuccefslefs, he had roam'd
" The leafstrown woods, half angry, half fatigu'd,
" He homeward turn'd his fteps; and as he went,

" His pointer, with ſagacious noſe, deſcries
" The long-ſought game. The ſportſman marks the ſign,—
" Up ſtarts the bird!—Eager the boy ſprings forth,
" And in a moment lifeleſs falls to earth,
" Shot by his father's hand!—

" What horrid thoughts
" Roſe in his breaſt, of that moſt ſolemn oath,
" Whoſe ſtrict obſervance thus had foil'd its aim?
" Or in what dread array the bed of death,
" The pallid form, the faſt expiring eye
" Of her he lov'd ſo well, her ſtruggling gaſps,
" And the cold damps that dew'd her ſtiffening hand
" Came to his memory, who ſhall dare to ſay?—
" He cannot tell them; for ſince that ſad hour—
" That miſerable wreck of Heaven's beſt work,
" He has become—yet Oh, to him deny'd!—
" The ſole poor ſolace of the frantic wretch,
" Deny'd to him inſenſibility.
" Still conſcious to that fatal deed of woe,
" To the ſame ſpot he duteouſly repairs,
" And daily acts the dreadful ſcene anew—
" Then peaceful to his narrow cell returns."

No. XVI.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1800.

To SOLOMON SAUNTER, Esq.

" Sir,

" AS I observe you do admit poetry into your amusing paper, allow me to offer the following pieces to your acceptance. The first was written by a lady, with whom I am well acquainted, on meeting with a fall as she was walking in pattens: the two others, though on subjects frequently selected by the pensive Muse, but yet pleasing to every feeling heart, are the production of the same pen.

" I am, Sir,

" Your very humble servant,

" L."

TO MY PATTEN.

Vile author of my dire diſgrace,
Who in the Borough, horrid place!
As on I trudg'd with rapid pace,
Haſt thrown me down,
Out-right before the fleering face
Of many a clown.

Thee, patten, on thy iron ring,
How ſhall my Muſe, indignant, ſing,
Or ſoar aloft on tuneful wing
To ſound thy name,
Who juſt haſt given ſo vile a fling
At my fair fame!

What had I done, that thy curſt tricks,
Malignant as "auld ſootie Nick's *,"
Should ſuch a ſtigma on me fix,
As this falſe ſtep,
Giving the name which ever ſticks,
Of Demirep!

* R. Burns, for the Devil.

Straight on with rapid step I past
Unmindful of the whistling bl[illegible],
Nor either way my looks I cast
But on I went,
Heedless of danger, till at last
I fell—sore shent!

There sprawl'd I in the public street,
Spread here and there my straggling feet;
No new-mown grass, no roses sweet
My fall then broke,
No melting accents then, I weet,
Of comfort spoke!

But "Curse the pattens!" from the crowd,
An hundred voices bawl'd aloud,
And one sly lout his head low bow'd,
To see me roll,
Then scratch'd his ear, and swore aloud
'Twas wondrous droll!

When on my feet again uprais'd,
Oh! how the rabble star'd and gaz'd,
And some good women seem'd amaz'd
I'd got no dirt;
But not a soul kind Fortune prais'd,
I was not hurt!

Yet,

Yet, hateful patten! I will learn
From thee ſome moral to diſcern,
And then no longer need I mourn
This merry ruth,
For tho' Miſhap's a tutor ſtern,
He tells us truth!

I thought, on pattens mounted high,
Some hair-breadths nearer to the ſky,
I might all ſlight barriers defy,
And trudge along,
While to the clouds my ſoul might fly
In ſearch of ſong!

But this miſchance one rule points out,
Ever to mind what I'm about,
Nor at the paſſing objects flout,
Tho' they're not pleaſant,
For it is true, beyond a doubt,
That they are preſent!

And while we tread this world below,
The things that croſs us as we go
Have power to work us weal or woe,
As we ſhall find,
Then ſure 'tis beſt to watch their flow
With tranquil mind!

Upon this wide and motley ſtage,
As on we toil from youth to age,
We muſe o'er many a topic ſage
With beſt intention;
But what we're after ſhould engage
Our whole attention!

Or we may chance one day to find,
When we're engag'd on thoughts refin'd,
And ſtrange vagaries o'er the mind
Amuſive flow,
We may, howe'er we are inclin'd,
Be laid full low!

Nor let us ever quite depend
That all will fall as we intend,
Or that our ſhield will ſtill defend,
Or ſtaff ſupport:
Rattans will ſlip, and ſticks will bend,
Or ſnap quite ſhort!

Then ever in this ſhifting ſcene,
Let us examine where we lean,
And howſoever well we mean,
Still, ſtill beware!
Let *Prudence* be our guide ſerene,
Our motto, *Care*!

ON

ON REVISITING MY EARLY HOME.

Ye hallow'd ſhades! ye long-remember'd groves!
Where, in thoſe happy days, on which my ſoul
Still dwells with pleaſure, childhood's vacant hours,
My ſportive footſteps preſs'd the dewy lawn
In airy gambols, hail!—Ye lovely ſcenes!
Dear to the heart of ſenſibility
The penſive pleaſures ye inſpire! to me
Be ever welcome the remembrance ſoft
Of days long paſt! And none more dear than thoſe
Which gaily flew in theſe deſerted ſhades!
Here now no more my eye can hope to trace
Thoſe forms rever'd, who, in my early days
With kind attention train'd my ductile mind!
Then, pliant, like the ſapling's tender bark,
But many a year, rough-harrowing, ſince has paſt,
And harden'd every lineament!—No more
My ear ſhall drink the tones of each lov'd voice,
Now huſh'd in the eternal ſleep of death!
Yet, ſtill on my heart's tablet deep engrav'd,
In all their force remain thoſe dear impreſſions!—
Thou ſacred power, whoſe all-commanding ſkill

Links

Links in the brain ten thousand chains
In endless combinations, still on me,
Clear Memory! shed thy warmest influence,
And in this sacred scene peculiar reign;
For here each tree, and every bladed tuft,
Where the low violet, and the primrose pale,
Adorn the bank, speak of departed hours!
In every shade a fane is rais'd to thee,
And every bird that swells the choral strain,
The woodlark warbling from the covert beech,
The cheerful thrush, the pensive nightingale
All wake thy finer touches in my soul.

Ye hallow'd shades, all hail! With sad delight
My feet retrace your long-deserted paths!
A mixture of strange agony and joy
Shoots in keen tremblings thro' my tortur'd frame.
Here, while kind Nature's ever bounteous hand
Presents again the well-remember'd scene,
More cruel man has every trace destroy'd
Of the lov'd mansion where so long I dwelt.
Where are ye fled, ye household deities?
Ye, who, pleas'd, hovering round the social hearth,
So long had witness'd the delightful train
Of cordial friendship, sympathy, and peace,
Within those walls that now subsist no more,
Say, can ye dwell with strangers? Are ye gone

Where

Where yon proud villa overlooks the vale,
The lovely site, where once our mansion stood?
Ah no!—Ye still cling round the sacred spot,
Ye find your altars in surrounding trees,
And as the hollow gale low whispers round,
Ye swell the murmur with the song of Death!

Why was the mansion levell'd with the dust,
And every dear memento quite dissolv'd?
The village train no longer know the place,
No longer dwell, with ever-ready praise,
On the kind virtues once residing there!
Those hospitable halls, whence never turn'd
The wandering stranger, unreliev'd, away
Are all forgotten now!—And is it so?
Forbid it, feeling! Oh forbid it, virtue!
Can I forget?—First I must cease to be!
Still in my breast the memory shall live,
In my fond fancy still the white walls stand,
And social forms adorn the lovely scene!

And feels my soul so strong the sad delight?
Throbs every vein thus keenly at the thought?
Ah then—how exquisite had been the pang
Had my first childhood known a mother's love!
To me—that precious blessing was deny'd!
The anxious fears, the soul-elating hopes,

Darting

Darting all ſanguine thro' futurity
Such as a mother's breaſt alone can know,
For the dear offspring of her tendereſt love,
Were never felt for me!——Still I recal
The ſad regrets that then my boſom wrung,
When, with my playmates, at their happier homes,
I witneſs'd—anxious—laviſh'd on their heads,
Th' impaſſion'd look, the fond, indulgent eye,
The cordial-ſpeaking ſmile, the frequent kiſs!
And oft in ſecret my chill'd heart repin'd
That no fond mother liv'd to ſmile on me!
Too keenly conſcious, from my youth I felt
An iſolated being—and, alas!
An iſolated being I ſhall die!
And when I drop, unheeded, to the grave,
What ſorrowing heart ſhall meditate on me?
I never joy'd beneath a mother's love!
I've never known maternal love to feel!
No dear connections wind around my heart,
And hourly wake each quivering ſenſe of bliſs!
I ſtand alone in this extenſive world!
And as I gaze around this penſive ſcene,
My aching feelings cling to every tree!
The days of youth are flown—thoſe happy days
When joyous Hope each fleeting object dreſs'd
In her own gayeſt mantle. Tho' each hour

Flew by, nor paid the promise of the past,
Still I hop'd on, and still on future bliss
I fix'd my straining eye.—Alas, for pity!
That future now is past—I hope no more!
And as I gaze around this crowded world,
I cannot find a creature, who would be
So little miss'd—so little mourn'd—as I should!

Return, my vagrant Muse! despair is guilt!
Own the high hand of Heaven, and rest content!
Content, if to thy humble lot 'tis given
To taste of peace and ease—and if perchance,
E'en to thy narrow power 'tis given to sooth
With tender sympathy one kindred breast,
To share the tranquil bliss that friendship gives,
More than content—let happiness be thine.

STANZAS

ON WAN[illegible] OWNS IN THE SAME NEIGHBOURHOOD.

How sweet on these uplands to pass the grey morn,
Or brush the light dews of the evening away—
These hills, which all tender reflections adorn—
These vales, where remembrance still loves to delay!

To

To retrace the dear ſcenes where my childhood I ſpent,
When in frolicſome gambols the hours quickly flew,
When a ſmile or a tear mark'd each moment that went,—
Short griefs—happy joys—that no time can renew!

Now—the ſmile is as tranſient, but not as ſincere!
It dimples the cheek, but not reaches the heart!
While the keen ſhaft of grief, dipp'd in poiſon ſevere,
Fixes deep in the boſom a durable ſmart!

Of the friends who my childhood with tenderneſs guided,
Or the playmates, with whom o'er theſe uplands I rang'd,
Cruel Death from my ſide has the former divided,
And ſome of the laſt keener Fate has eſtrang'd.

On the joys which remain, can I venture to lean,
When the ſpring of all bliſs, youth, is fading away,
When a clo[illegible] may ſo ſoon overſhadow the ſcene,
And a drea[illegible] dark night may ſucceed the fair da[illegible]

[illegible]ear moments of you[illegible]ory retrace,
When the light buoyant ſpirits danc'd briſk in each vein,
When your own brilliant ſun gave each object a grace,
"* And the heart would no trace of misfortune retain,"

* Beattie.

Oh say, from my grasp if for e'er ye are fled?
Can no artifice win you to bless me once more?
'Tis ye who enrich the low cottager's shed,
And, robb'd of your magic, the palace is poor!

"* The sun sets in night," but the morning renews
His splendour to glad Earth's fair bosom again;
The world mourns in Winter, but Spring's tepid dews,
Her soft gales, and sweet flowers, re-enliven the plain:

But the day-star of youth, when to man it is set,
No more shall illumine his changeable sphere,
And when wintry old age fills his soul with regret,
No spring sweet-returning his bosom shall cheer!

* Indian Death-song.

No. XVII.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 1800.

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

" Sir,

" AS I underſtand that you have devoted yourſelf to the ſervice of the world, and mean to benefit ſociety at large by your periodical lucubrations, it is very convenient to me to ſuppoſe that, as well as all the other good qualities of your predeceſſors, which I am very ready to affirm you, you poſſeſs in abundance, you mean to adopt that ſteady benevolence which induced them always to liſten with ſympathy and attention to the complaints of undeſerved diſtreſs, and to contribute, by every exertion in their power, to remove the ſtigma of unmerited calumny. As a being moſt unjuſtly defamed,

defamed, and most ungratefully despised, I now call upon you to admit my appeal to the hearts and feelings of mankind, and to enable me, through the channel of your excellent and amusing paper, to open their eyes to the merits of one of their truest benefactors.

It has been the practice, from time immemorial, of those who have undertaken to convey to the world at large either the complaints or the histories of any of the branches of my family, to consult a huge book, written in the universal language of human nature, in order to discover their genealogy: and as all these pedigrees, thus variously extracted, are carefully registered in our Herald's Office, I assure you it is no unamusing employment to see how differently different biographers have copied the self-same genealogy, and how my relations are sometimes described as sons and as daughters of the most opposite and dissimilar parents. I would advise those who, after this my public warning, may chuse to consult the aforesaid book (in which I acknowledge there is much useful information, though every one is not equally qualified to select it)—I would, I say, advise them to recollect that it is written in the plainest and most simple language imaginable,—a language which admits neither of trope nor metaphor, and of which the energy and beauty are

always destroyed by an attempt to discover hidden meanings and obscure allusions. This has been the usual fault of those who have wished to enrich their lucubrations with any transcript from this immortal and immutable work, which like your great English luminary, Shakespeare, has been obscured by the innumerable crowd of commentators, who have seldom been contented with the plain and obvious meaning that met their first ideas, but have determined to develop occult mysteries and untraceable analogies. For my part, I could not trust my history to such very insufficient biographers; I have already suffered too much from the misrepresentations of those who have undertaken to investigate my conduct, and am determined to stand forth my own historian!

It is usual with those who begin to relate their own stories, to trace back their ancestors from remote generations. For my own part, I have a lively recollection of my origin!—but of my progenitors—none! And as I had rather be distinguished as the founder of a numerous and illustrious family, than as an unworthy scion of the deepest-rooted heraldic tree, I shall make myself better known by my effects, which I may consider as my children, than by any ancestry I could invent or adopt.

It is now ſome thouſand years ſince I firſt awoke to conſciouſneſs of exiſtence. The firſt ſentiment I can remember feeling, was, that the univerſe was made for me! and this ſentiment, in a thouſand varied modifications, has ever ſince been uppermoſt in my mind. I have, therefore, every reaſon to believe it well founded.

I felt myſelf linked, by an inviſible attraction, to a being of erect form and expreſſive countenance, who was walking alone in a beautiful and ſhady garden. There were numberleſs other living animals alſo enjoying the delights of this incloſure; but I had, even in that early period of my life, a partiality for the moſt diſtinguiſhed perſon I could perceive, and therefore I attached myſelf to the only creature who ſtood erect. This creature, as I afterwards found, on the increaſe of my knowledge, was man, and was, in reality, the natural monarch of all the other inhabitants of the garden! I had, therefore, good reaſon to pique myſelf on this innate faculty of diſcernment, which had enabled me, while yet the dew of that ſleep, from which I had immediately awakened, was upon me, to ſelect the moſt worthy object for my attachment. I inſinuated myſelf into the boſom of man, and he cheriſhed me as a welcome gueſt; and when, a ſhort time after, his fair partner awoke, as I had done, lying on a bank of flowers,

flowers, which bordered a clear and glassy stream, I flew to her with equal ardour, and directed her first regards to the natural mirror which flowed unruffled beside her.

This happy pair were not yet slaves to the miserable policy their descendants have introduced into the world. They cherished me as a valuable inmate, and in return, I prompted them to perform a thousand little attentions to each other, which secured the continuance of their mutual attachment.

I do not pretend to infallibility.—I have committed some mistakes. Perhaps the secret persuasion by which I induced my fair companion to listen to the flowing words of the serpent, was among the number. Be that as it may, I have undoubtedly been a most active and zealous friend to this pair and their descendants. If the real and unsophisticated records of human actions could be searched without prejudice, should not I be found to have been the *primum mobile* of all illustrious deeds? Have not I prompted the hero to battle, the conqueror to mercy, the lawgiver to deep research, the philosopher to study, the anchoret to solitude, and the Bramin to self-torture? What is there that has been dignified by the names of virtue, heroism, patriotism, fortitude, modesty,

modesty, humility, and a thousand other titles equally illustrious, in which I cannot, with justice, claim a distinguished share? And yet have I been stigmatized as the greatest enemy to mankind: I have been branded with the most disgraceful epithets; I have been declared incompatible with the aforesaid qualities, (which, in the common acceptation of language, are esteemed good ones;) I have been contemned by the hero, argued into nonentity by the philosopher, disclaimed by the legislator, and scouted by the conqueror. Yet have I felt conscious of my own dignity, and with a degree of magnanimity not to be equalled by any other character in the known world, I have inspired many eloquent philippics against myself.

The fact is this.—In the benevolent activity of my disposition, I did, as I have already candidly confessed, commit a few mistakes. These mistakes, as it was never my temper to conceal the truth, I honestly acknowledged, and will own that I even felt a gratification in the humiliation. But ungrateful man, who is ever ready to forget benefits, and to remember injuries, turned this my candour against myself, and seized the opportunity to load my name with all the odious and disgraceful epithets he could invent. This treatment, so very injurious to an ardent and benevolent

lent ſpirit like mine, did not, however, damp the philanthropy of my nature. It cauſed me to collect all my energy within myſelf, and inſpired me with the generous deſign of becoming the concealed, as I had hitherto been, the avowed benefactreſs of mankind. I therefore called up from the Lethéan pool, where they lay immerſed, the ſhades of thoſe virtues I have named above; and although their real exiſtence is in the Olympian regions, I have contrived to adorn theſe their fac-ſimiles with ſo many of their trappings, that they paſs with the credulous race of man, as the immortal beings themſelves.

Enchanted with the new viſitors, with whom my ſkill had peopled the earth, the ungrateful race whom I had hitherto ſo fondly cheriſhed, and who, notwithſtanding all their miſconduct, had ſtill ſhewn ſome regard for me, wholly deſerted me, and attached themſelves to theſe ſwelling phantoms. I who ſtill retained my natural modeſty of ſize and ſhape, became completely eclipſed by the viſions to which I had given veriſimilitude: and though I am ſtill allowed to preſide over the common and trivial affairs of life, I am utterly excluded, by the univerſal fiat of mankind, from all important concerns.

I am frequently entertained to ſee how men of

deep

deep penetration detect my influence over all but themselves, and how cordially they despise those actions which they can trace to my guidance; while I feel an internal conviction that, however they may think themselves led by one or other of those gigantic shadows, which live and move only at my command, I am, in fact, the unsuspected spring of all their conduct.

Nothing, indeed, can more convincingly prove the total subjection of man to my power, than the fact that he, who is certainly endued with the faculty of reason, can take these visionary forms for their divine and substantial originals! How can he imagine that true Benevolence would condescend to wear a robe patched with advertisements, and garnished with long lists of names? or that real Patriotism would declaim to the unenlightened vulgar, and after pointing out grievances which would otherwise have remained unnoticed, feel a gratification in having taught them that they were unhappy?

Many moralists, after profound research, having discovered that my power was not wholly annihilated either by the lucubrations of philosophy, or by the prevalence of the phantoms I have described—(indeed it would have been hard if visions, whom I myself alone had animated, had really

really usurpe[illegible]my power and dominion—but this circumstance[illegible]e moralists were [illegible]ot acquainted with!)—were [illegible]t willing to confine my influence to the assemblies of the gay, the sphere of fashion, the tea-table of the polite, and the toilet of the fair! But indeed, these gentlemen are woefully mistaken! The being who now addresse[illegible] you, reigns alike in the cabinet of the Statesman, the study of the learned, the ten[illegible] of the warrior, and at the bar of justice. Authors and ladies have, in all ages, been deemed subject to my sway; but authors and ladies are no more my peculiar property, than divines, lawyers, politicians, and Jacobins.

Oh the glorious opportunity that the increase of Illuminatism affords!——But here I must not enlarge. It is permitted to me to betray the secrets of time past; but to develop the events of futurity is a privilege not allowed me. In fact, if it were, it would be impolitic in me to avail myself of it, since it might only tend to weaken my power. In the things that have been, my dominion is so firmly established, that I have no fear left my candid av[illegible] shake my throne. I shall doubtless still continue to direct the most distinguished actions that are performed on the great theatre of the world; nor have I the smallest doubt of obtaining, at least, an equal

sway

ſway in the new regulations wi[illegible] my worthy pupils, the M[illegible]dern Phi[illegible]ſophers [illegible]ſh to introduce; indee[illegible], I have ſown ſuch [illegible]ood ſeed in their minds, that I need take no farther pains about the cultivation of it, but may look forward to the hour of repoſing at my eaſe in the bowers the[illegible] are u[illegible]conſciouſly adorning for me.

It is hardly to b[illegible] ſuppoſed that I have exiſted ſo many years without feeling ſome ſymptoms of that paſſion which, ſooner or later, ſubjects all creatures to its ſway. Indeed, I did form a very ſtrong attachment to a being who has ſo many traits in common with myſelf, that he has often been miſtaken for me. It was this apparent ſimilarity that firſt prompted my affection. His love of diſtinction and ſuperiority, the efforts he made to obtain his ends, his air of conſcious elevation, and the noble ſcorn with which he looked down on the inſignificant crowd of common mortals, inflamed my heart with a fervent paſſion; but, upon cloſer examination, I found that where my diſpoſition induced me to court popularity, he affected reſerve; the applauſes which were neceſſary to my happineſs, we[illegible] irkſom[illegible] to him; he cenſured my conduct as light and frivolous, while I complained that his was too far removed from the common affairs of life. In fact, I found that mutual familiarity would produce in his haughty ſoul contempt

contempt for me, and in mine a terror of him: I therefore wi[illegible] avoided any permanent connection with him, and now, though we ſometimes ſeem to purſue the ſame means by ſimilar ends, yet we are perpetually at variance. There are indeed many occaſions when he deſcends, as he calls it, to my level, and there are many when he tells me I riſe to his; but on the whole, we are beſt friends at a diſtance.

As for you, my good Sir, who have undertaken to inform and to amend a world which, would it believe me, wants neither information nor amendment, I entreat you, for your own ſake, not to deſpiſe the friendſhip I now offer. You have, I doubt not, with that penetration you ſo eminently poſſeſs, detected me alike in the levity of the coquette, and in the reſerve of the prude; in the airy graces of the beau, and in the ſtudious gloom of the pedant. Put yourſelf under my guidance, however, and I will reveal myſelf to you when you leaſt expect it. I will ſhew you the great ſeal I always uſe, and you may compare it with the impreſs ſtamped on every human action. I will develop to you all my Proteus-like changes and concealments, nor do you ſhrink from the taſk! It may in perſpective appear formidable, but its difficulties will diſappear the more implicitly you reſign yourſelf to my guidance.

guidance. You may fear your readers will think you unequal to your undertaking, but remember, the happy self-confidence I inspire, demands and obtains the confidence of others. And how neceffary this confidence is, to a man in your fituation, I leave you to decide—fcarcely is it more fo to a Prime Minifter.

My merits, and the ungrateful returns mankind have made to them, might lead to a much longer difcuffion than the prefent; but as I now wifh no more than to open your eyes to your own interefts, and to induce you to accept of the fupport and affiftance I offer you, I will only add that, whether you avow it or not, all your cotemporaries, and all that innumerable pofterity, to whom I affure you, your fame and your works will be dear, will believe you to have been under the influence of,

"Dear Solomon,

"Your faithful friend, and invariable advifer,

"VANITY."

No. XVIII.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1800.

THE passion of love is supposed to exert its sway most despotically over the softer sex, the gentler half of our species; but though I cannot but confess that women, taken in the aggregate, are more delicate animals than men, and less capable of resolute exertion and firmness, yet there are instances among them of a firm endurance of evil, an energy of mind fully equal to the boasted strength of the stern Lords of the Creation. A woman indeed, who has a soul at all—(for it is well known to be the Turkish creed that that beautiful machine is not endued with so useless a spring, and there are some instances among our own countrywomen that would almost induce one to believe that a few fair Turks had straggled into Great Britain)—a woman, I say, who has a soul,

a soul, is much more animated, more alive than man. Her impulses, if less permanent, are more lively; and though their vigour may quickly relax, yet the first spring is so powerful, that it will carry them further than a more continued impetus will lead a man.—But I am going to set before my readers the character of a female, not more distinguished for her feeling than her resolution; and whose case, as it may be common to all, may contain a general warning and a general example.

Cecilia was, from her infancy, the child of misfortune. She lost her mother in the first month of her life, and experienced through her childhood every disadvantage which can attend a motherless female. It is needless to detail the circumstances which threw Cecilia, without fortune and without friends, into a dependant situation in an elegant family. There, however, we find her, from a very early age, bereft of all the splendid hopes her father's prospects once held out to her, and trusting alone to "Innocence and Heaven."

Cecilia was no beauty;—instead of the Grecian elegance of form, and the unrivalled delicacy of feature she might have inherited from her lovely mother, she could boast only an active, though not a slender, person, a complexion that glowed with the

the pure tints of health, a countenance that bespoke good humour, and an eye that beamed intelligence. Her ſkin had been deſpoiled of its poliſh by that foe to lovelineſs, the ſmall-pox ;—and the narrowneſs of her fortune deprived her of the adventitious advantages of dreſs. The lowlineſs of her ſituation, which ſhe felt moſt acutely, (perhaps too much ſo, ſince circumſtances, not incurred by guilt, ought to bring no imputation with them) repreſſed all the freedom of her manner, and all the graces of her youth. With theſe exterior diſadvantages, Cecilia was living with a woman of faſhion, fortune, and beauty, who, ſatisfied with the charitable deed of affording a home to a fellow-creature, thought ſhe treated her with ſufficient kindneſs when ſhe did not beat her.

Cecilia, however, poſſeſſed a mind far ſuperior to her ſituation: it had been elegantly and even ſtudiouſly cultivated. She was no mean proficient in the modern accompliſhments, and was more than commonly ſkilled in the Belles Lettres. She had loved moral philoſophy, as the moſt improving and the moſt intereſting ſtudy; and ſhe now ſought in its doctrines a relief from the diſcomforts ſhe experienced. She could not believe but that unwearied aſſiduity, diligence, and good-humour would procure her the goodwill and even the

the affection of her patroness; but the course of a few years shewed her that she deceived herself, and that a fine lady is a non-descript in ethics.

Had Cecilia been one of those humble toad-eaters, who can bear to dangle after their ladies into public, clad in their forsaken ornaments, at once the envy and the scorn of the whole tribe of waiting gentlewomen,—had she been an adept at flattery, and echoed with applause the unmeaning witticisms she was condemned to hear, she would probably have been a favourite: but such was not her character. Conscious of some internal merit, Cecilia sought to be chosen, not suffered; and finding, unhappily, that she could not obtain what she sought, she gradually withdrew more and more from observation, and though obliged to frequent all company, she never met with even the common attentions due to her age and sex.

Thus retired in herself, and thrust back by circumstances, it was not possible for her to obtain any attention in the gay and dissipated circle in which she was condemned to move, nor to have the least chance of being lifted to a better situation. The best years of her life were wasted in hopeless despondency, and she could look forward to nothing but passing the evening of her days

in the same joyless gloom, when some events occurred, which seemed to promise a possibility of happiness.

Alcanor, an intimate friend of the family, had for some time distinguished Cecilia with more than a polite—with a kind attention. Alcanor was a man of sense, a complete gentleman, and bore an unblemished character for probity and honour. Cecilia, who, with a bosom formed to feel the warmest raptures of love, with a judgment keen to perceive, and a heart alive to distinguish excellence, had hitherto preserved herself from any particular attachment only by perpetual reflections on the hopelessness of her situation, felt a fearless gratitude for the friendship of Alcanor. It exalted her in her own eyes above the insignificance into which she was conscious she had sunk in the estimation of those around her; yet considering Alcanor as a being many degrees above her, she indulged her gratitude without the smallest idea that it would ever ripen into warmer sentiment. Nor could it ever have disturbed her peace, though it might have added to her happiness, but for some occurrences, not necessary to be detailed, which threw her often into confidential talk with Alcanor.

Though wholly a novice in the affairs of love,

Cecilia had not reached the age of twenty-eight without having observed the effects of the passions; and the inquietude she now began to be conscious of, alarmed her for the nature of her sentiments towards Alcanor. His increasing kindness increased her inquietude and her alarms. She strictly examined her heart, and learned to distrust, not him, but herself. She had hitherto put no restraint on the natural warmth of her manner when conversing with him: she now assumed a more guarded style. Alcanor saw the difference of her conduct, and strove, by the most delicate attentions, to bring her back to her former unreserve. Cecilia could no longer be blind to the meaning of Alcanor. What had she to fear from a man whose bosom was the seat of honour? What a happiness, what a triumph for her to be selected by so superior a being! She looked timidly at Alcanor. His respectful deference, his affectionate attentions, his graceful gaiety reassured her; by degrees her timidity, her reserve wore off, and without a word on either side, they were on the footing of avowed lovers. To have doubted his honour would have been sacrilege. She became a new being. She looked forward with some apprehension indeed to the situation to which her marriage would raise her; but she endeavoured to render herself worthy of it. She hourly improved in grace, gaiety, and appearance, and Alcanor became

became hourly more and more attached: yet ſo delicate were the marks of his attachment, as to be by all unnoticed, ſave by the conſcious Cecilia!

She was now anxiouſly expecting the moment when his avowal ſhould diſſipate all apprehenſions, when one day, after a temporary abſence, as ſhe advanced to meet him with her accuſtomed gladneſs, ſhe was ſtruck with the ſtrangeneſs of his manner!—Polite he was indeed; but what was mere politeneſs from Alcanor to Cecilia? She gazed in his face; ſhe ſaw in it no anſwering warmth; ſhe retired to weep, and in ſolitude, chid herſelf for her fancifulneſs. She returned to prove Alcanor faultleſs, and herſelf miſtaken. She found him to all others cheerful, animated, gay, as uſual—to her invincibly cold. Day after day paſſed on, and no returning kindneſs beamed in his eye. Hope was extinct, and thus ended for ever an attachment ſingular in its progreſs, and barbarous in its termination.—No opportunity now offered of ſpeaking alone to Alconer, and if it had, of what ſervice would it have been to the unfortunate Cecilia? Of what was ſhe to complain? Nothing, however, was ever further from her wiſhes than to complain, except to reproach Alcanor!—To conceal her griefs, to conquer her feelings, to command her countenance, theſe

theſe were the taſks ſhe impoſed upon herſelf—theſe were the efforts that exhauſted her ſtrength, that imbittered her ſolitary hours, that bathed her pillow with tears!

Theſe ſalutary efforts, however, ſucceeded, and Cecilia is a noble example that philoſophy and exertion can ſurmount the greateſt trials, and afford comfort under the heavieſt misfortunes. She has devoted her time, with exemplary fortitude, to thoſe purſuits which formerly intereſted her, and ſhe finds from her laudable exertions the trueſt and moſt permanent comfort. One only reflection remains to imbitter her hours of retirement, and that is, her earneſt and not unjuſtifiable curioſity to learn the reaſon of Alcanor's ſudden change: but this explanation ſhe muſt aſſuredly reſt without obtaining, ſince ſhe can never aſk, and he ſeems not at all diſpoſed to volunteer it.

That no future clouds may ariſe to diſturb a ſerenity ſo laudably regained, muſt be the wiſh of every one who reads this recital; but what words can do juſtice to the unſuſpected perfidy of Alcanor, who firſt obtained the full confidence of his deſtined victim, and then amuſed himſelf with watching the progreſs of a paſſion he coolly reſolved to reduce to deſpair? Cecilia, indeed, with

a delicacy

a delicacy of which [illegible] most feeling mind could be capable, sometimes reproaches herself with having too readily yielded to the semblance of affection; but her own heart, and that of the treacherous Alcanor, must fully exculpate her from this blame. The following [illegible] however, which I obtained by an accident not to be related, prove her jealousy of her own conduct, and the acuteness of her feelings.

I caught a bright fantastic cloud,
And in the glittering moonlight dress'd it,
Then, of the beauteous pageant proud,
Too fondly to my bosom press'd it.

I fancied, by the dubious light,
I saw my phantom sweetly smiling;
My bosom throbb'd with wild delight,
All Reason's soberer fears beguiling.

What dreams of joy my soul revolv'd,
What pleasant visions hover'd o'er me!
'Till, by th' incautious warmth [illegible],
My treasure faded from before me!

Condemn'd

Condemn'd henceforth still to grieve,
My senses rove in wild confusion,
Nor can I scarcely yet believe
My bliss was all a vain illusion.

From treacherous hope will I no more
Deceitful forms of pleasure borrow,
But silently my loss deplore,
And sink a prey to secret sorrow.

Such is the tale I wish to impress on the minds of my fair countrywomen; since to all the lot of Cecilia is possible, it would be wise in all to arm their minds with similar fortitude. The above lines, written at a very early period of her distress, but very ill convey her present philosophic calmness.

My readers will perhaps be angry with me for filling up my paper with the following letter.

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"Sir,

"I am a very unhappy man, and yet, Sir, I have five thousand pounds a year, a beautiful

beautiful and virtuous wife, an unencumbered fortune, and a good temper. I owe my misery to my grandmother, who has been buried these ten years, and I never found it out till about three months ago. My grandmother,—God rest her soul!—brought me up with infinite care. I was but a puny child, so while other boys were playing at chuck-farthing in the mud, or sliding on the ice, I was sitting on a stool by her side, listening to her stories. To be sure, the dear old lady had a great number, and dearly I loved to listen to them. Fine accounts, Mr. Saunter, of my uncle, the Commodore, and my aunt, the Maid of Honour, and my cousin, the Squire's Lady! and many, many more, all of which, if you will do me the favour to invite me to a sociable dish of tea at your lodgings, I shall be happy to relate to you. I cannot ask you to my house for a reason I am going to explain.

"I was married about four months ago to a very handsome young lady, with no fortune at all, for I was not mercenary; and for the first month I was perfectly happy. My wife listened to all my conversation with the greatest pleasure, and seemed as interested in the accounts of my family as I was myself; but at the end of that time, Sir, a gay cousin of her's, an Ensign in the Militia, came to pay her a visit. For a week I thought this

this an improvement, for I had two hearers instead of one; but now, my wife listens with more pleasure to this gay Ensign's accounts of the adventures and scandal of every town he has been quartered in, and even in the midst of one of my best anecdotes, my wife will take her cousin out walking, or call him to play piquet, saying, "it is only one of my cock and bull stories."

"Now, I know but one anecdote where there is any thing relating either to a bull or a cock, and I appeal to you, Mr. Saunter, whether there is any reason for calling all my stories by that name on account of this one. I will tell you what it is, Sir, and you shall judge if it be not very amusing. The dairy-maid at my grandfather's, one morning, when she went into the farm-yard,—but I beg your pardon—I hear my wife and the Ensign—I must make haste to conclude; but, as I said before, if you will invite me to your lodgings, I will tell you all I know, and in the meantime I remain,

"Dear Sir,

"Your afflicted humble servant,

"JEREMIAH BULLCOCK."

No. XIX.

No. XIX.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 1800.

A PERFECT tragedy has been deemed the noblest triumph of human intellect; and indeed, when one considers the nice discrimination of character, the knowledge of the heart of man, the power of arresting attention and exciting interest, that is required in a writer of tragedy, one cannot so much wonder that so many have failed, as that any have at all succeeded. An epic poet, when he has once arranged his plan, can supply by narrative or description the blanks in character and sentiment. He can call in the aid of supernatural machinery—nay, it is even a part of his business so to do, in order to facilitate events sufficiently out of the common way, to excite wonder by their grandeur, and curiosity about their termination.

termination. It is much eafier to make a man act than think—it is much eafier to develop the workings of his mind in a feries of lines in the author's own perfon, and fay, "*thus thought, thus felt Atrides,*" than to put into the mouth of each character thofe very words which difplay the feelings themfelves, and not only the feelings and paffions themfelves, but with that peculiar difcrimination which marks the individual.

There is, perhaps, a regular progrefs common to all great paffions; but it is marked by very diftinct fhades in the breafts of every different perfon. No two people would perhaps exprefs emotion in the fame manner, or be guided by fimilar feeling to fimilar conduct. To mark thefe variations of character with all their delicate traits of diverfity, is more peculiarly the province of the dramatic writer. The aim of tragedy is in general to furprife, to elevate the mind, to affect the feelings, and intereft the curiofity of the fpectator. For this purpofe a grand and uncommon incident is ufually felected, diftinguifhed perfonages are made the victims of misfortune, and exalted fentiments are clothed in poetical imagery. Thefe are undoubtedly many of them fine poems;—whether they are peculiarly entitled to the term *dramatic*, I do not mean to enquire; but they are certainly lefs calculated to intereft the heart, than thofe

ruder ſtructures, built by the hands of our immortal Shakeſpeare, where probability is frequently violated in the incidents, and diſregarded in the concluſion---where poetical imagery is perpetually ſacrificed to the jingle of words, and the moſt ſublime ſentiments too often debaſed by an irreſiſtible conceit; but where individual truth of character is inviolably preſerved.

Some dramatic writers, conſcious of the want of intereſt in the more regular tragedies, have daringly overleaped all bounds, and imitated Shakeſpeare in his tranſgreſſions of the rules alone. But, however the man who wiſhes to write a drama, feels inclined to complain of the difficulties impoſed on him by the arbitrary laws of critics, he may reſt aſſured, that it is much eaſier to compreſs an incident into a given portion of time, and to contract it into a certain ſpace, than to make the characters ſpeak at once the language of nature and of paſſion. How far the German play-writers have been acquainted with our dramatic productions, and the criticiſms upon them, I cannot judge; but aſſuredly, they have determined to aſtoniſh by their boldneſs of plan, and eccentricity of ſentiment. It cannot be denied but that there is much originality of expreſſion, and ſome novelty of thought, much nervous conſtruction, and many ſtriking ſituations in the German plays; but

but I own I apprehend no advantage to the literature of this country from the present fashionable rage for German productions. The German poets have not yet nearly arrived at their highest pitch of perfection. Literature and poetry, yet young in that country, are now taking bold and enthusiastic flights, in which they can derive no advantage from the instructions of reason, or the controul of judgment.

To paint the wild ebullitions of high-wrought feeling, to represent passion as the grand sublimer of human nature, to throw beings of enthusiastic irritability into situations inconceivably agonizing, are among the favourite objects of the German Muse. To accomplish an undertaking so gigantic, no expression can be too forcible, no language too glowing.—Morality, principle, virtue—all fade before this new philosophy of the passions.—The Germans, in these daring attempts, may be sublime: let us, whose judgment condemns as wild these strange vagaries of the domination of feeling, beware, lest, in endeavouring to emulate their sublimity, we roar in bombast, and expire in bathos. Minds, which teach themselves to admire these representations of overstrained passions, (for I am convinced it is an acquired taste) will scarcely ever be able to feel any relish in the more simple beauties of just delineations of nature!

like

like those, who having vitiated their palates with high dishes and luxurious fare, find it extremely difficult to return to simple diet and unsophisticated viands.

It is by no means my intention to enter into any remarks on the German plays: I shall therefore only observe, that it is a pity Morality should be violated without the least regard to her rights; because I look upon it, that, however it may be the business of dramatic writings to elevate the mind, and interest the feelings, they have a higher task to perform, to which the others bear only the proportionable value of being the best means to promote the more desirable end. It is surely their business to inculcate right sentiments, and promote the diffusion of virtue; and what mode of writing is so well adapted to convey right impressions with such powerful and general effect? This is a point, however, which, for a considerable time, has never seemed to occur to any author. Writers have rather considered their own powers, than the beneficial effect their labours might produce. Shakespeare himself, so capable of tracing the spring and progress of passion, of marking the almost insensible motives which operate to produce a deviation from virtue, has been far from making it the settled principle of his plays. He wrote from the impulse of the moment,

moment, and the desultory and vague ſtyle of his plots ſufficiently proves that, however thoſe maſter-ſtrokes of nature might occur to him in the unfolding of the incidents, the incidents were by no means imagined with a view to produce thoſe undeniable proofs of his exquiſite reſearches into the human heart. Had Shakeſpeare formed ſuch a plan, how might the world have benefited! It remained, however, for the preſent age to produce a genius capable of conceiving ſuch an idea, and hardy enough to attempt its execution with no inadequate pen. My readers will inſtantly ſee that I allude to "A Series of Plays." The ſpecimen already before the Public gives the moſt glowing promiſe of the ſucceſs of the whole; the preliminary diſſertation exhibits a depth of reaſoning, an acuteneſs of penetration, an accuracy of obſervation, not often to be met with.

In reading that excellent eſſay, one is tempted to regret, that ſo much beautiful imagery, and glowing colouring ſhould be thrown away on a proſe diſcourſe. Poetical beauties are ſcattered over it with a profuſion which would have enriched a long poem, and which the author, with unſparing hand, uſes to illuſtrate a diſquiſition, whoſe intrinſic merit would have been a ſufficient recommendation. No one can doubt the ability of the writer for the ſelf-impoſed taſk—no one can

imagine

imagine a clearer eye to diftinguifh thofe fmall beginnings of paffion, which "are as when a man letteth out water." The remark on the eagernefs with which people of all defcriptions watch indications of character, and fymptoms of agitation, muft come home to the heart of every individual; and with what beautiful, what affecting folemnity, and what exquifite precifion are defcribed the effects on the mind of the obferver, of the difcovery of fuch tumultuous paffions exifting in the breaft of a fellow-creature!

It is not my intention to make long extracts from this valuable difcourfe; but I cannot forbear tranfcribing a paffage on this fubject from the 10th and 11th pages. Speaking of an angry man——

"Every eye is directed to him—every voice "hufhed to filence in his prefence; even children "will leave off their gambols as he paffes, and "gaze after him more eagerly than the gaudieft "equipage. The wild toffings of defpair, the "gnafhing of hatred and revenge, the yearnings "of affection, and the foftened mien of love—all "that language of the agitated foul, which every "age and nation underftand, is never addreffed "to the dull nor inattentive.

"It

"It is not merely under the violent agitation of "passions, that man so rouses and interests us; "even the smallest indications of an unquiet "mind, the restless eye, the muttering lip, the "half-checked exclamation, and the hasty start, "will set our attention as anxiously upon the "watch, as the first distant flashes of a gathering "storm. When some great explosion of passion "bursts forth, and some consequent catastrophe "happens, if we are at all acquainted with the "unhappy perpetrator, how minutely will we "endeavour to remember every circumstance of "his past behaviour! and with what avidity will "we seize upon every recollected word or "gesture, that is in the smallest degree indica-"tive of the supposed state of his mind, at the "time when they took place. If we are not "acquainted with him, how eagerly will we "listen to similar recollections from another! "Let us understand, from observation or report, "that any person harbours in his breast, concealed "from the world's eye, some powerful rankling "passion of what kind soever it may be, we will "observe every word, every motion, every look, "nay, even the distant gait of such a man, with a "constancy and attention bestowed upon no "other. Nay, should we meet him unexpectedly "on our way, a feeling will pass across our "minds as though we found ourselves in the

"neighbourhood

"neighbourhood of ſome ſecret and fearful thing. "If inviſible, would we not follow him into his "lonely haunts, into his cloſet, into the midnight "ſilence of his chamber? There is, perhaps, "no employment which the human mind will "with ſo much avidity purſue, as the diſcovery "of concealed paſſion, as the tracing the varieties "and progreſs of a perturbed ſoul."—

I am certain I ſhall eaſily obtain the pardon of my readers for preſenting them with an extract of ſuch very ſuperior merit. The comparative view of the mode in which different ſpecies of compoſition are calculated to execute this ſo intereſting reſearch into the heart of man, is performed with a clearneſs and preciſion that undeniably award to dramatic writings the preference in this difficult, though moſt engaging taſk. To the dramatiſt it alone belongs to repreſent man—Noveliſts, poets, hiſtorians, may deſcribe him,—but he deſcribes himſelf in a well-executed drama. The impulſes of paſſion mark themſelves by words too minute to become the ſubject of obſervation to the hiſtorian; and though ſometimes ſeized by the Noveliſt, the general fear that they ſhould eſcape the attention of the reader, cauſes them to be beat and hammered out till they cover an incalculable ſurface of paper. When a minute indication of nature is thus diſplayed with artifice and oſtentation,

oſtentation, you may remember the eloquence of the writer, but intereſt is excited no longer.

When, in the ſwellings of his heart over the loſt Cordelia, Lear interrupts the moanings of the father with the abrupt requeſt to an attendant,—"Pray you undo this button!" what boſom of feeling does not throb in ſympathy with the venerable King's? What deſcription could ſo forcibly have excited the conſciouſneſs of that burſting agony, that at length maſtered the powers of life.

This ingenious and reflecting writer juſtly obſerves that tragedians have in general ſelected "ſtrong outlines of character, bold features of "paſſion, and ſtriking dramatic ſituations."—thus neglecting "thoſe ſmaller touches of nature, "which ſo well develop the mind;"—and after ſhewing how much more intereſt is to be excited, and how much more good produced by "unveil-"ing the mind under the dominion of thoſe ſtrong "and fixed paſſions which, ſeemingly unprovoked "by outward circumſtances, will from ſmall be-"ginnings brood within the breaſt, till all the "better diſpoſitions, all the fair gifts of nature are "borne down before them,"—proceeds to an inveſtigation of the different ſpecies of comic dramas. The remarks here are equally judicious

and acute, and produce a ſimilar conviction in the mind of the reader, of the power poſſeſſed by the author of this diſſertation to form a new æra in dramatic poetry, and reſcue the ſtage from the unmeaning ribaldry and high-flown heroics which too often diſgrace it. The unfolding of the plan, of which the three plays now before the public, form but a ſmall part, ſtrikes the mind as grand, noble, and highly laudable; nor can a doubt ariſe of the capability of the author to execute a project which none but a ſuperior genius could have been capable of forming, which does honour to the preſent age, and will ſufficiently clear it from the imputation, equally diſgraceful, of frivolous levity, or metaphyſical abſurdity.

At a period, when many people are proſtituting ſplendid talents in the purſuit of wild and pernicious chimeras, involving themſelves in the bewildering clouds of modern philoſophy, and broaching ſpeculations and opinions which threaten to overturn all moral relations and all ſocial order—when others (perhaps a ſubordinate link in the ſame great chain of modern ſophiſtry) endeavour to debaſe the public taſte to ſpectacles of mere ſhow and pageantry, ſubſtituting the puerility of fairy tales, and the exploded horrors of romance, for delineations of human nature, and bold pictures of character,—it is ſome comfort

to an advocate for the dignity of the species, to find an individual arise, who can calmly look down on the frivolous or pernicious pursuits of the literary world, and, with a firm and vigorous pencil, can at once form a bold outline, and fill it up with truth and correctness.

From the Blue Beards, the Pizarros, the Castle Spectres of the English stage, from the wild ravings of the German drama, and the lax morality thence incorporated with our theatrical exhibitions, from the mummery of pageantry, and the cant-words of comedy, it is a welcome relief to turn to the page where the powers of the mind find real exercise---where the feeling heart subscribes to the truth of the portrait---where the powers of a Siddons and a Jordan will find adequate employment---and where the embellishments of poetry are made subservient to the noblest purposes.

It must be the sincere wish of every lover of literary merit, that the author of these admirable performances would emerge from retirement, and let the world know whither to address the applause they have excited; but it is to be hoped that it will not be long ere conscious merit will boldly face the day. In the meanwhile, as a book already before the Public is a fair object of remark,

remark, I propofe to make fome obfervations on each of the plays of which the world is in poffeffion; and I am fure I could not felect a topic for thefe lucubrations which would be more generally welcome. I cannot but efteem myfelf fortunate in having fuch a field to harveft, and fhall enter on the tafk with an eagernefs I can very inadequately do juftice to. However, the work of criticifm is always delightful where the chief bufinefs of the critic is to point out fubjects for applaufe; and in a work like that before me, where the grand merit is of fo profound and undeniable a nature, I fhall not long delay my courfe, by picking up the ftraws that may float upon the furface.

No. XX.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1800.

To SOLOMON SAUNTER, Esq.

"WILL you permit me, my good Sir, to make a few reflections on the story of Cecilia, as related in your eighteenth Number? I am the mother of a family, and I need not explain to a person of your penetration, that the mother of a family, especially of daughters, views every thing with a very different eye from a mere common reader. People in general, read rather to be amused themselves, than with any more remote purpose. They examine whether incidents be probably related, and sentiments naturally described; but a parent looks on every thing as it may affect the welfare, the moral character, the peculiar feelings of those beings who excite the strongest of all possible interests.

"You

"You relate the story of Cecilia yourself, as from your own knowledge: I therefore entertain not the least doubt but that she is in fact the injured, blameless being you describe her. Her situation was certainly a peculiar one; but for that, it is difficult to imagine how a woman of eight-and-twenty, of good sense, and more than common reflection, could be duped by attentions, which pointed to no decisive end, and symptoms of affection so difficult to be ascertained. Nor is it an easy matter to suppose that a man, who had obtained an unblemished character for probity and honour, could have been capable of such wanton duplicity, such unprovoked barbarity. Do not misunderstand me, Sir, I entreat you—I do not in the least doubt but that the facts are as you have stated them; but there is a probable ill consequence which may arise from a tale so interesting, which this letter is intended to point out to your notice.

"There cannot be a more fatal mistake for a young woman to fall into, than that of supposing those attentions pointed, which are, in fact, unmeaning. Cecilia had no positive proof that affairs were as she trusted, and surely every woman is wrong who suffers herself to be deluded into such perfect confidence by any thing short of an explicit avowal. The men are too apt to take advantage

advantage of that easy, trusting nature which catches so readily at every appearance of attachment; and if they carry their artifices no further than, as Alcanor has done, to laugh at the silly victim of their deceitful attentions, the consequences are often felt through life by the unhappy girls, who are thus duped more by their own vanity and credulity, than by the malignant intentions of the men. Not, be assured, that I mean to offer any exculpation of the conduct of Alcanor. His attentions appear to have been too pointed to be misunderstood, and his subsequent change too abrupt not to expose him to deserved obloquy. I would only wish to warn inconsiderate young women how they imagine themselves in a similar situation with Cecilia, lest they should, in fact, have been betrayed by their own creative fancy, which saw love where politeness only was intended. You will excuse these remarks, Mr. Saunter, and make what use of them you please, believing me to be

"Your constant reader,

"MATRONA."

There is so much truth and good sense in the observations of my correspondent, Matrona, that I would not but insert her letter complete, though it

it is rather a pointed critique on the ſtory of Cecilia. I fully agree with her as to the danger and impropriety there is in a young woman's too readily perſuading herſelf that a gentleman feels attachment to her, where, in fact, he is merely actuated by common civility; and where women are ſo inattentive to their own dignity, as to catch ſo eagerly at every trivial gallantry, they muſt blame themſelves if the men take advantage of this ready diſpoſition, and after fanning their hopes till they are near flaming out, fly off to laugh at the ſilly victim of ſelf-deceit. At the ſame time, I own, nothing is to be pleaded in excuſe for thoſe men who will take pains to perſuade young women that they do feel a real attachment, and yet carefully avoid ſaying a word that may be brought againſt them. I remember to have met, ſome years ago, with ſome lines in a newſpaper, peculiarly applicable to this ſubject; and though perhaps they are not poetically perfect, they have a ſimplicity and pathos in them which appeal very forcibly to the heart. I cannot reſiſt the impulſe I feel to inſert them here.

STANZAS.

De[illegible]der ! does thy pensive eye,
  Thy cheek, with jealous anguish pale,
Less than passion's pleading voice,
  O'er the artless mind prevail ?

Is [illegible] he a base seducer,
  Whose fond looks and silent art
Own the maid he seems to worship
  As the idol of his heart ?

Deep and fatal is the triumph
  Gain'd by one expressive glance ;
Speaking to the heart, and leading
  Infant passion's heedless dance.

Let not he who thus seduces,
  Say, the victim, vain, mistook
Friendship's tribute for a lover's,
  Saw devotion in a look !

Sure the wound, and deep th' impression
  Innocence from cunning takes,
His wily eyes like culprits stealing
  The simple heart his falsehood breaks !

In

In the case of Cecilia, I can assure my sensible correspondent, Matrona, that there were many aggravations of Alcanor's guilt, many circumstances that rendered indubitable the meaning of his attentions; and perhaps there cannot be an instance of greater turpitude, than so cruelly at once to overthrow the hopes he had so artfully raised—to disappoint the confidence so implicitly reposed in him. Surely to a generous mind there could not be a more inviolable tie, than that tacit compact which implied so perfect a reliance on his honour; but my fair and enthusiastic cousin Belvidera Dulcibella is dissatisfied with the tale on a very different account from Matrona—she is extremely disappointed that in such distressing circumstances, Cecilia should admit a thought of comfort. It is very unworthy of a heroine, she argues, to meet such "heart-rending woe" with any thing but despair and death; and I do believe she would have been better pleased to have had the world deprived of so valuable a being as a rational woman, than to have had Cecilia forfeit her character for tenderness and sensibility, or any thing occur that may tend to prove the vincibility of love.

Love is undoubtedly a very powerful and a very fascinating passion; but in a well-regulated mind, it is by no means an invincible one. The only

only sort of love that rationally promises any long duration, is that which has for its basis the virtues and good character of its object. It is a sentiment which originates in esteem, is daily heightened by mutual attentions, till it becomes a more tender and ardent feeling, and afterwards naturally settles again into esteem, rendered ever more interesting and more animated from the enthusiasm of that passion, which, however transitory in itself, gives a lasting zest to that more permanent attachment which succeeds it.

This rational sentiment is, I own, very different from that sudden and instantaneous flash of congenial minds, which carries immediate conviction to the heart of each, and precipitates them into an avowal of feelings far beyond the calm dignity of reason, and which, from their violence, and complete dominion over the soul, convince their enthusiastic victims that they are eternal; but it promises far more duration, and far more happiness: the one is the blinding flash of the vivid lightning—the other, the calm and genial light of day.

I know there are minds so heroic that they would rather be, like Semele, the victim of fire and flame, than rest contented with that equable happiness which is alone worthy of a well-regulated

regulated mind. The attachment which produces it, however, being born of esteem, cannot subsist independently of its parent; and when the misconduct of the beloved object proves that esteem ill-founded, however deep for a while may be the sorrow that attends the discovery, yet it is certain that love will, after a time, be extinct in the heart which can no longer feel esteem. I am well aware that this cool argument will lose me the favour of my cousin Dulcibella, and of all the admirers of German plays. I am sorry I have given my pen so great a latitude, and must endeavour to retrieve my character with them on some future occasion. That I may no longer go on to irritate them more and more, I will insert a letter on a totally different subject.

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

" Sir,

" As I was walking the other day in the fields near London, I was struck with rather a genteel figure of a man who was coming towards me, and seemed to be using a strange variety of gestures. I watched his actions, and concluded him afflicted either with an inoffensive insanity, or with that malady called St. Vitus's Dance. As we passed, however, my gentleman made

made me a bow of humble recognition. I returned it with civility, but could not at the moment recollect that I had ever seen him before. I walked on, musing on the causes that produced such singular action in a public field, and at last, his features struck me as having been once familiar to me. I pursued my walk, and as I turned about to return homeward, I perceived my gentleman very near me. He was now perfectly quiet, and I observed a placid kind of melancholy expression in his countenance which confirmed me in my first conjecture of his insanity. He bowed again, and it now occurred to me that I had known him some years ago the *Roscius* of a country theatre. I returned his bow with an air of recollection, and addressing him by his name, found I was not mistaken. I turned and walked by his side the way he was going, and entered into some conversation; his countenance assumed an expression of pleased gratitude that gave pleasure to my heart, and I asked him how it happened that he had quitted the situation in which I had formerly known him.

" Ambition, he said, and the love of fame had drawn him from his obscurity to figure on the great theatre of London. The applause he had obtained on a provincial stage, had led him to think highly of his powers, and to think highly of

them,

them, was the first step towards wishing to display them to more advantage. He had exonerated himself, he told me, from his engagements with the country Manager, and had been received into the London corps.—Here he ceased, and I asked if his wishes had been gratified.

'Alas, Sir!' said he, 'if you frequent the theatres, or if you even read a newspaper, you must know that they have not: yet I have no reason to complain. I had made a false estimate of my talents, or if I had not, I found the characters in which they enabled me to shine, already in the hands of veteran performers, who could not be expected to resign them to me. There were two reasons against it—either my inferiority or my excellence; the first the town would not bear quietly—the second would be insupportable to themselves.'

"I smiled at my friend's philosophy, and asked if he lived in tolerable comfort.

'Yes, Sir,' he replied, 'I have a pretty wife, and a decent apartment. She is industrious and good-tempered, and with my salary, though I am but an underling, I can live better than I did when the first performer in the country. But domestic ease and comfort, Sir, can ill satisfy a soul

that pants for fame; the thunder of applause, the melting tribute of tears is wanting to my gratification here; and I am actually entering into terms with my old friend, the provincial Manager, to return to my old situation, and eat my hard crust at home, so I can but have it seasoned by the praises of the boxes.'

"This confession brought us to the door of his house, and he invited me to enter. I was introduced to his wife, who was nursing a pretty little baby, and studying the part of Juliet. She was really an interesting figure, but seemed fully to share her husband's love of fame. I sat a while with them, conversing on their future prospects, and found them both rejoicing in the thought of changing a settled peaceful obscurity, for the more glorious labours of convulsing whole barns with tumults of applause. I made them a small present, and took my solitary walk back to town, ruminating on the love of fame, which can exalt itself even above the solid comforts and enjoyments of life. But those reasoners are wrong, who confine ambition to the bosoms of the great and the powerful: it is not an object to every one to change the fate of empires, or to suspend listening senates in attention; but every individual, however insignificant, has his own circle in which he can seek and obtain a fame as flattering to him, as the laurels

laurels of Nelson. To be the most expert driver of a ploughshare, is as true a gratification to the peasant, as to obtain the first prize at the University is to a literary student;—to beat his comrades in running, wrestling, boxing, at the annual wake which convenes all the country lasses from the neighbouring villages, as amply crowns the ambition of the clown, as the envy, the imitation of his compeers, and the flirting attentions of the ladies can do that of a Bond-Street lounger; and my friend, the stroller, is as fully satisfied with the glorious meed of drawing "iron tears down blacksmiths' cheeks," as Mrs. Siddons can be with sending half a dozen ladies away in hysterics.

"After all, Mr. Saunter, this love of fame is an useful passion: it impels men to many great and glorious actions; it is a strong principle of exertion, and has produced many effects beneficial to mankind. It animates the labours of the philosopher, the heroism of the warrior, the eloquence of the senator, the ingenuity of the mechanic, and the dissipation of the fine lady. It has razed towns, produced epic poems, composed sonnets, made speeches, and invented violet soap. It has made the idle industrious, the valetudinarian healthy, and has dedicated to the Public the Leisure Hours of Mr. Solomon Saunter.

 "Farewel,

"Farewel, worthy Sir! and if the love of fame never produces a more prejudicial effect than the laſt, mankind will be much indebted to it, and it will always find a ſtrong advocate in

"Your very humble ſervant,

"ESYCHUS."

No. XXI.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1800.

HAVING received letters from various correſpondents upon ſundry philoſophical ſubjects, I ſhall, without further preface, put them together in this paper for the amuſement of my readers.

To

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

"Sir,

"When I was at the sea-side last spring, I was much amused, after every heavy gale of wind, to observe the sands covered with that singular and beautiful marine production, which has so much puzzled naturalists, and which they have agreed to class under the equivocal name of *Zoophites, or animal plants.* The elegant colouring and whimsical properties of these sea-anemonies induced me to preserve some of them for as long a period as I could, and to examine their hours of unfolding, and their motives for expanding into that species of bloom. As I had always a turn for Natural History, deeming it in truth one of the noblest and most engaging studies, and most peculiarly adapted to the enquiring and curious mind of man, I received much amusement from this pursuit; but, as no doubt, other speculatists have experienced before me, the current of my thoughts was diverted from the precise object of my attention, by a simple question from one of the unlearned vulgar, who, diverted by seeing my room filled with

with ſpecimens of ſea-weeds, ſhells, corals, &c. aſked me if the generally-received notion were true, that every thing on the earth had its counterpart in the ſea? Theſe were not, I confeſs, the very terms in which the queſtion was put, but they convey the ſenſe of it perhaps more accurately. I know not the anſwer I returned, but I know that the circumſtance raiſed a train of ſpeculation in my mind, which led me to ſeek among the known productions of the earth for a counterpart to the ſea-anemone, or any other of the claſs of Zoophites.

"I was a long time puzzled in this reſearch—and it was not till I began again to frequent the haunts of men in this great metropolis, that I diſcovered that for which I ſought. I there obſerved, among the faſhionable reſorters to the public places, a ſet of beings, for whom Moraliſts, the natural philoſophers of mankind, have been long embarraſſed to find a name. They may be diſtinguiſhed from the other two-legged beings, whom, in outward form, they reſemble, by a certain vacancy of countenance, and abſence of manner, which declare a total want of intereſt in the ſcene before them, and a ſpeech belonging to a diſtinct race of creatures. They ſeem to be impelled by no particular impulſe, but to open and ſhut their eyes, their mouths (which latter, by the

the bye, yawn very often) from some cause purely mechanical; they have been called *Insensibles*, *Loungers*, *Apathists*, and by some *Automatons*; but I find an objection to all these denominations: to the three first, because they seem to imply a species of system in supineness, of which these personages are utterly incapable; and to the last, because whatever may be imagined from the total absence of sense, they are certainly living animals: I therefore beg that henceforth they may be known by the name of *Sea-Anemonies*, or *Zoophites*, as being an appellation peculiarly appropriated to their visible qualifications. They shew themselves at public places when most crowded, as the Zoophite does on the sea-shore, when most strewn with shells, sea-weed, and fish. The Zoophites seem to have no impulse but to display their delicate colouring, and to be insensible to all emotions of pleasure and pain: such, I am sure, are the characteristics of their human counterparts. But a word to the wise is enough—I will enlarge no further on this subject; but leaving it to Mr. Solomon Saunter, whose imagination will instantly catch fire at this hint of a parallel, subscribe myself

"His very obedient humble servant,

"CURIOSUS."

To

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

"SIR,

"Convinced that the human mind was not endued with its various powers, to suffer them to rust in inaction, I have long applied myself to the interesting science of metaphysics, and flatter myself I have started some amusing topics of speculation. Among others, I was considering the other day the frequent instances of insanity which have taken place among men of genius, and think it would not be unworthy the consideration of the philosopher, to enquire into the causes of this premature decay of the intellectual faculties, where they seem to have been strongest. From what cause it may arise, I know not; but there seems to be a great deal of truth in the celebrated couplet,

> "Great wits to madness nearly are ally'd,
> "And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

Whether there be in the quality of wit, or, more properly speaking, of imagination, some tendency towards madness or idiocy—whether the examples be more remarked, as being more conspicuous, or whether there be a certain quantity of that intellectual fire allotted to every individual, which

which is sooneft exhausted where it burns the brighteft, is a research which would require much time and deep investigation. Popular opinion feems to lean to the former theory, and the frequent inftances fo familiar to every mind, appear in fome degree to corroborate it; yet it is difficult to affign a philofophical caufe for this unfortunate tendency, and ftill more difficult to conceive that the intellectual faculties fhould be liable to decay from exercife, when it is allowed that exercife is neceffary to call them into action. Nor is it all exercife that feems to produce this effect. Sir Ifaac Newton, and many illuftrious names among the philofophers of paft times, of whom no one will fufpect that they fuffered their powers to decay for want of ufe, and the late much-regretted Mr. Smeathman, who paffed a long life, to its very clofe, in the moft laborious exertion of the mental powers, are fplendid examples that the melancholy ftate of idiocy or infanity is not the neceffary confequence of continued intellectual effort.

"It feems, indeed, hard to imagine that the very exercife, which is neceffary to the development of the foul's powers, fhould, if carried a little too far, wear them away; and this confideration would naturally lead us to feek for fome other caufe of this unhappy fact. Beafts, we know,

know, very soon reach their ultimatum of ability: there is a point beyond which they cannot pass; it may, perchance, be so with man. But very few, comparatively speaking, try how far human intellect can be extended, or how constantly it will bear such extension. The few instances of early maturity, such as Barretiore, &c. who had attained, at a very early period, knowledge seemingly beyond the reach of man during the longest life, seem to prove, by their untimely deaths, that they had stretched the intellectual machine as much as it could bear; just as those individuals, remarkable for early and enormous size of body, have rarely attained even a mature age. Yet to those who have accustomed themselves to consider human knowledge as constantly progressive, and the perfection of it to be among the privileges of spiritual beings, and of man when released from his earthly encumbrances, the reflection that there is a limit which cannot be overpassed, is a melancholy and a degrading one.

"Human nature is so imperceptibly influenced by second causes, that it is difficult to say whether there really be any essential difference in the mind as it comes from the hand of the Creator, or whether all the variety we perceive among the individuals of our species, arises from the operation of some unsuspected circumstance. There is

no

to judging how far, even previous to the birth, the state of the mother's health, spirits, or temper may influence the mind of the embryo; nor how the food which it receives when it first issues to the world, may operate upon its tender nerves. It is perhaps impossible to ascertain how early ideas are received, or first impressions imbibed; and the Persian Magi seem to have entertained very just ideas on this head, when they took such particular care to guard their women, during the state of pregnancy, from all irritating impressions, and all violent emotions of the feelings or passions, trusting that such a state of tranquility would operate upon the offspring, and by preserving it in undisturbed quiescence, would ensure to its future feelings that placid serenity, which that wise people rightly judged to be among the first blessings of life.

No one who pretends to philosophize, but must have observed that the intellectual faculties expand at very different periods in different individuals; and it would be worth enquiring, if there were any possibility of ascertaining the fact, whether the gradual decay of them in a healthy and regular old age, bore any proportion to their gradual advance in youth—whether those who opened late in life retained their powers the longest, or lost them the soonest. The four teeth called

called the teeth of wisdom, always make their appearance later, and depart earlier than any others. Whether this analogy hold good with respect to the mental powers, I am not able to determine; but I am quite sure that my letter is as long as I can conveniently make it, and I will therefore subscribe myself

"Mr. Saunter's

"Very humble servant,

"SPECULATIST."

To SOLOMON SAUNTER, Esq.

"Sir,

"I am an old man, and from my earliest youth, have taken a delight in those investigations of the moral powers, which come under the denomination of *Ethics*, which I have always thought a very superior branch of philosophy to either Natural History or Metaphysics; inasmuch as that which regulates the actions and tempers of men, is superior to that which regulates nothing at all. I never heard that the best natural philosopher of the present or any foregoing age, could preserve himself from the effects

of

of the most common of those phenomena he knows so well how to account for. Though every dabbler in the science knows that Nature has provided the birds with a species of oil, which guards them from suffering by the heaviest showers of rain, I have never met with any philosopher expert enough to accommodate his wife or daughters with a similar composition, to preserve their plumage from damage by the war of the elements; nor any metaphysician who could guard either himself or his offspring from the influence of second causes, however well he could describe the mode of their operation.

"Now though the instances are fewer than, for the honour of philosophy, I could have wished, yet there have been some, Mr. Saunter, in which the recollection of a moral precept has served to quiet the fury of the passions—nay, in which the character has been gradually ameliorated by the influence of the benign study of Ethics. These considerations impressed me very early in life, and determined me to give way to the natural bias of my mind, and devote myself to the science of moral philosophy; yet as I have something of speculation in my disposition, I have sometimes indulged myself with forming ideas on characters from particular circumstances, and then watching whether or not I had been right in my prognostics.

"What

"What has particularly led me to expatiate upon this at preſent, is, that looking over, and burning ſome old letters laſt evening, I perceived in one of them the following remark, which I had written fifteen years ago to an intimate friend of mine, on the future characters of two nephews of his. I preſerved the letter, and here tranſcribe the paragraph :—

"Charles and Harry arrived here yeſterday " morning. I ſtood at the hall-door to receive " them, and they almoſt immediately diſtinguiſhed " me. They ſprung towards me with alacrity, " for you know we were always great friends; " but as they proceeded up the avenue, I formed " one of my cuſtomary prognoſtics concerning " them. As Charles advanced, he leaped, at one " ſpring, over ſome brambles that croſſed the " path, while Harry went cautiouſly round them; " again, Charles minded not two or three puddles " left by the rain of laſt week, but daſhed " through them, while Harry picked his way " along the edges: the conſequence was, that " Charles reached me ſome moments ſooner than " Harry, and with his natural energy, had ex" preſſed his joy and affection before his brother " got up to me. I could not help reflecting that " if, as in all probability they would, they con" tinued to act in the ſame manner, Charles, by

puſhing

"pushing directly to his object, and being stopped
"by no trivial obstacles, would speedily become
"a great man, while Harry, delayed by every
"little hindrance, would with much less celerity
"reach the end of his career, if indeed, he rest
"not entirely at the line of mediocrity.'

The event, Mr. Saunter, has justified my prediction.—Charles chose an arduous profession, and has long since attained to eminence in it; Harry lingers in the beaten road, and though careful to avoid all errors, and therefore a truly estimable man, is far behind his more splendid and not less worthy brother.—Whether you will think these remarks deserving of your attention, or whether they will lead to any just investigation of the indications of character in youth, I leave entirely to your judgment, and am proud to subscribe myself,

"Sir,

"Your constant reader and admirer,

"PHILOSOPHOS."

No. XXII.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1800.

IN an age when so many able pens have been employed on the subject of female education, it may seem unnecessary to multiply systems, and arrogant to pretend to improve on those already formed. Yet, in a conversation, the other day, with a very sensible lady, who is the parent of two or three girls, it seemed that the ideas then struck out, might not be unuseful to stem a little the too great rage for theorizing.

In all plans of education, the first idea that strikes the experienced friend of childhood, is, that they have been formed in the closet, and are totally incapable of being reduced to practice.— The systems appear ingenious, but they rest too much on general principles, and are, in fact, written as if all those who have devoted their time and

nd thoughts to the subject, were decided Materialists and Necessarians, and fully convinced that positive effects must follow certain causes. They proceed on the supposition that parents and teachers never suffer any pursuit, however engaging, any business however necessary, to interfere with the incessant attention requisite to accomplish the great end of education; and also assume it as a grand postulatum, that children will be at all periods docile to instruction, and eager to second the systematic views of their teacher. Then, with instructors, free from every human failing, and children, never wayward, and always intelligent, they proceed by regular gradations to form the scholar, the wit, and, in fine, the perfect human being.

Since, however, we live not in Utopia, but in a country where the parent or guardian will occasionally suffer other avocations to supersede the care of forming the infant mind, and where children will sometimes be perverse, and prefer play to instruction, or, like a bad partner at whist, counteract the whole plan which appeared so calculated to lead them progressively forward, for want of comprehending its meaning, ought we not to adapt our rules to the present imperfect nature of parents and children? It has been remarked, that if we attempt too much, we are

likely to fail entirely; though I am well aware that those who are fond of quoting authorities, will remind me, that it has been recommended, in the pursuit of every kind of merit, to keep always [illegible] perfect model in view. However, as we ha[ve] hitherto not succeeded in our endeavours after perfection, by any of the complicated machines that contend for the patent of universal adoption, suppose we were to try an engine of more simple construction. It is a general axiom in all the arts and sciences, that those are more likely to succeed, who produce the greatest effect by the most simple means. As a philosophical axiom, [it] seems as if it must apply to every case imaginable, and we will therefore try to adapt it to education.

The great fault in all compilers of system, is, that their views are not sufficiently extensive.— Far be it from me to lead any one to surmise that their plans do not embrace a sufficient variety of objects. My opinion is directly the reverse. When, therefore, I complain of the narrow views of former projectors, I mean simply to state that they mistake the means for the end; and this mistake prevails almost universally, both in all systems, and in all practice of female education. Those who have the care of youth, seem to think, that to crowd the greatest proportion of instruction into

into a given time, to produce the greateſt poſſible improvement in dancing, drawing, French, muſic, and manners, muſt be the grand object of education.

Give me leave, however, to aſk of theſe great undertakers, what is the real end to be propoſed in the culture of youth? Is it not, muſt it not be, to make them virtuous in conduct, happy in themſelves, and agreeable to others? When a young lady ſpends five hours a day in practiſing the difficult graces of modern muſic, it is not done with a view to make a pecuniary advantage of her talents—it is done to enable her to pleaſe! and from the nature of modern accompliſhments, it is but too evident that the whole tendency of them is ſimilar. Let us then enquire, if the unwearied pains of teacher and pupil produce this effect? and if it may not be often obſerved, that many women, without accompliſhments, do, in fact, pleaſe more than many of thoſe who poſſeſs them in the higheſt degree [illegible] be the caſe, is it not worth while to ſearch for more effectual means to produce the end propoſed?

And firſt then, *for virtuous conduct.*—Ought not the firſt care of parents to be, that their children ſhould be grounded in virtuous principle? And is virtuous principle ſufficiently attended to in

in the laborious process of education? Is not the glitter of sentiment too often substituted for the sterling metal of principle?—and the frothy declamation of French philanthropists, for the genuine dictates of Christianity? I know that in an age like the present, when wits and witlings are so apt to stigmatize all religion with the name of Methodism, I shall run the risk of being branded with the appellation of *fanatic*, for what I am now going to say; but I despise their sneers, and will boldly assert that to be tolerably well acquainted with the principles of religion, would be a better guide to the youthful mind than all the dazzling varnish of modern benevolent sentiment. The plain and simple precepts of the Christian code, easy of remembrance, and universal in application, will encumber no mind with high-flown heroics, nor puzzle any casuist with divided duties. Once grounded in these principles, the future conduct will be secure, and the best foundation laid for the second point proposed—*internal happiness.*

Though it has long been an undisputed dogma among Moralists, that the consciousness of rectitude is a perpetual source of happiness, yet we are willing to make a provision for a secondary sort of felicity, which we all of us feel to be very desirable. The greatest enemy of this branch

of

of internal happiness, is *ennui*,—a sensation which, as the English language cannot express, ought never to be suffered to make itself felt.—It cannot be doubted but that the habit of constant employment must, most effectually, banish *ennui*. If therefore, you wish to make your pupils happy, make them industrious. Whatever be their employment, accustom them to pursue it with vigour and interest. I am aware that many people will answer, that to feel interested in the occupation of the moment, is the gift of Nature—that it is impossible to infuse vigour and energy into some sleepy constitutions. I confess that, among my own family, too many instances occur of this original inertness of character; but I fear it hath ever been the family policy of the Saunters to counteract, by education, all natural inclination towards activity and industry. Witness my own individual instance: nothing therefore can be argued from the habits of one particular set of men, however numerous they may be; and I am inclined to think that even where any constitutional indolence does shew itself, much may be done, by proper management, to create habits of activity. Praise judiciously bestowed, examples properly selected—above all, the daily habits of the instructor or parent, will go a great way towards forming a similar disposition in the pupil. If a young person sees those about her sedulously

 employing

employing every moment of their time, always engaged in ſome occupation which is purſued with earneſtneſs, propoſing ſome end to themſelves as the motive of their own induſtry, and furniſhing her with ends and motives ſuited to her age and purſuits, a habit of induſtry and vigour will inſenſibly ſuperſede all native coldneſs or lazineſs.—Perhaps a ſort of reſting-place in *time*, might be not ill adapted to this purpoſe. The merely fixing a period by which ſuch a work was to be achieved, ſuch a difficulty conquered, would operate but little; becauſe in the commonly ſmooth courſe of life of young people during the period of tuition, no ſufficient reaſon occurs why ſuch an era ſhould be fixed. It would not, therefore, be an injudicious plan to create little artificial varieties for the purpoſe of fixing ſuch epochas. A journey, a viſit, a deſirable indulgence, or any ſimilar contrivance that will readily occur to a judicious teacher, will very ſufficiently anſwer this purpoſe; and I confeſs I look upon the holidays of ſchools as one of the beſt parts of thoſe inſtitutions in this point of view. Many ſtudies, many works are purſued with alacrity and vigour, in order to be completed by the holidays; and the parent, or domeſtic inſtructor, would have the advantage of being able to accelerate the period in proportion to the induſtry of the pupil.

No one who has made any practical obſervations on human nature, will deny the influence of activity on happineſs. It is ſufficiently evident that it not only baniſhes the *tædium vitæ*, but that it lulls the ſenſe of pain or grief, and diſpoſes the mind to an habitual cheerfulneſs. Thoſe who are conſtantly employed, and who take an intereſt in their purſuits, have no time for thoſe little elegant languors, thoſe becoming indiſpoſitions, thoſe querulous diſcontents, thoſe peeviſh unhappineſſes, which are dignified among faſhionable females by the names of *delicacy* and *ſenſibility*; and if I were not convinced that the habits of activity and the conſequent cheerfulneſs were perfectly compatible with the moſt refined manners, and the moſt real delicacy of feeling, I would not preſume to place even *internal happineſs* in competition with them.

Having thus provided for the two firſt points, it now remains to enquire what will make our pupils agreeable to others. Let me now aſk, have accompliſhments that power? Every one will anſwer, no! ſince whatever pleaſure they may afford, every one will eſteem and like the performer in proportion to the amiable traits of character ſhe diſcovers. A young woman may ſing and play, may dance, draw, and talk French, and be

be very disagreeable. It is evident, then, that accomplishments will not secure this first desideratum in the female character. Not that I would banish accomplishments—I would only exalt them to their due station, that of auxiliaries to internal happiness; they afford resources for many hours that might otherwise lie open to the inroads of languor and *ennui*; and therefore, where there is any turn for any particular one, let it be fairly and assiduously cultivated, not as an ornament, but as an employment: let not too much value be placed on it in the first light, and the pupil will practise it naturally and without affectation when any occasion occurs in which it will be of either utility or pleasure.

There have been instances (and I have known such) of ladies who could speak French fluently, who have been vain of the accomplishment, and have perpetually made use of French phrases in company, where English ones would have conveyed the meaning equally well; and who yet would not act as interpreters to a foreigner, or condescend to converse with a poor mortal, who, with an aversion to silence, was condemned to pass hours in being gazed at, without the power of speaking. Let all accomplishments be rendered subservient to utility—let them never either be made an exhibition, or considered as any thing wonderful.

wonderful. Conquer, by all means, that false pride which will not perform after a more perfect rival. It is not necessary that Emilia should sing better than Clara, or that Fl[illegible] should draw with more taste than Matilda; but it is necessary that she should be neither envious nor vain-glorious. Make accomplishments what they ought to be, subservient to nobler purposes, and they will not be cultivated too sedulously.

If we look round the world, and consider what characters most powerfully attract our regard and liking, we shall find that we immediately pay that homage to the easy and unaffected, to the cheerful and conversible—to her who possesses playfulness without forwardness, and simplicity [illegible] garity. The first requisite for all these qualities, is *good-humour*; and I confess, as we do not wish to make our ladies mathematicians or sophists, I should be inclined to abate of that rigour of study which is too apt to impair the natural gaiety of youth. Lest I be here taxed with inconsistency in having so strongly recommended industry, let me observe that even in their amusements, the character of energy and interest should be cultivated. The play-hours afford room for a judicious instructor to lay the foundation of many excellent qualities of the heart, without crowding every

moment

moment with information and inftruction, which children hear without comprehending, and which juft ferve to damp that ardour, without which nothing can be done, and which I would wifh to fee as ftrongly exemplified in their amufements, as in their more ferious employments. Never be the native gaiety of childhood repreffed, though it muft be prevented from degenerating into rudenefs; but the volatile fpirits, the ready laugh, the frolic glee, are too valeable to be commuted for a few grains more of gravely acquired wifdom. Do not ftop a child that decorates her doll with flowers, to explain the botanical ftructure, or the medical virtues of them; but when her curiofity prompts enquiry, then gratify it as fully as you can. Not but that on fome fubjects curiofity muft be damped, and enquiry repreffed; and this fhould not be done by evafive anfwers, but an abfolute refufal to anfwer at all. Above all, preferve truth in all your dealings with your pupil, and encourage her fincerity. Though you preferve the dignity of an inftructor, do not wholly reprefs the familiarity of affection; mingle in her plays—she will ftill more readily fuffer you to direct her ftudies; endeavour to form the habits of eafy converfation, and if poffible, to fteer between the two extremes of forwardnefs and bafhfulnefs.

Let

Let nothing be done with effort! Through life this maxim is most useful. Wherever we perceive effort, disgust and satiety follow. Neither politeness nor benevolence, gaiety nor industry, should appear to be the effect of effort. The true criterion of a great mind is, that it acts without effort, and does not [illegible] too high a value on what it has done. The person who contemplates with wonder his own performances, will never excite either the wonder or the respect of others. The mind of youth should be peculiarly guarded against this false vain-glory, and the noblest consequences may ensue from judicious cultivation.

Here then, we may conclude—*Good temper*, *unaffected gaiety*, and *unstudied ease* will ever be agreeable to others. The *habits of industry* and *activity* will confer *internal happiness*, and the *principles of religion* will secure the *practice of virtue*. The ornamental parts of the structure may be added at will, ever keeping in view the grand axiom, that they are only subservient to the principal object of education. The culture of the heart and temper must be the primary aim; and whatever polish may be bestowed, must never be mistaken for the end which an instructor of youth ought to labour to attain. Benevolence, friendliness,

friendlinefs, deference to age, affection, activity, good temper, gaiety, fincerity, and piety, thefe are the true accomplifhments of the female character. The cultivation of the mind by books, as it confirms thefe principles, and opens a fund of elegant and interefting employment, is the ne[illegible]aftiy, come thofe fhewy and catching ornaments, which are now too often purfued to the almoft total neglect of thofe more valuable qualities.

If thefe hints fhould be of any ufe to reflecting mothers, and refcue one girl from the mania of fuperabundant [illegible]on, I fhall think my life not wholly faunte[illegible]ed away.

No. XXIII.

Thursday, February 27, 1800.

THAT Happineſs depends upon opinion, is a remark that has been frequently made, and frequently aſſented to; yet people in general, though they are willing enough to complain that their allotment of happineſs is ſmaller than their deſerts, do not ſeem to ſtrike at the root of the evil, or, in other words, to endeavour to rectify their opinions. Perhaps opinion is a phraſe not ſufficiently preciſe and definite to be uſed in a moral ſpeculation. Opinion is a vague and undecided quality, which differs in the mind of every individual from that of his neareſt and moſt intimate connections. Opinion is perpetually varying, and no man can affirm that *that* which is his opinion to-day, ſhall be ſuch at any future period. Yet happineſs, if it mean any thing, muſt mean

ſome

some positive and settled good, not a vague desultory sense of amusement or enjoyment, which to-day may spring from a successful effort, and to-morrow from a good dinner.

That species of opinion then, on which alone happiness can be laid to depend, ought rather, (in researches into the springs that move the human mind, in which no expression can be too specific) to be termed, that disposition which inclines us to look on the bright or on the dark side of events. The want of precision in terms induces many errors in all philosophical disquisitions; and opinion, which is liable to change from a thousand circumstances far short of conviction, is a very inadequate word to express that bias of the mind, which determines the felicity or misery of a life. That people are at times gratified by trifles which opinion alone can decide on, is not to be doubted; but to express such gratification by the word *happiness*, is another perversion of meanings. That disposition, bias, or temper, which gives a prevailing colour to all opinions, is, in fact, the foundation of the argument; and opinion hath no more right to arrogate to itself the properties of a quality totally independent of it, than it hath to decide on those immutable points of virtue and morality, which it hath been the lax fashion of the prevailing philosophy to refer to particular judgments.

judgments. If once we make opinion the meaſure of happineſs, and the rule of right and wrong, we utterly remove the landmarks of true virtue and probity, and degrade happineſs to mere caſual enjoyment, and virtue to an exerciſe of the fancy.

The true ſpring of happineſs is ſeated in the ſoul, and excites a diſpoſition to view every thing in the beſt light imaginable. Whether this propenſity to happineſs be a gift of nature, or whether it be obtainable by effort, would be a worthy enquiry; and ſurely any mode by which it could be obtained, would be the greateſt deſideratum in philoſophy.

Many arguments on this ſubject will, no doubt, occur to many of my readers, and I am perſuaded that much is to be done in this inſtance, as in many others, by well-directed and vigorous effort. Health and bodily conformation, to ſay nothing of abſolutely outward accidents, muſt, in ſome degree, influence the temper of the mind; but that philoſophy is far indeed from being genuine, which is liable to diſcompoſure or elation from mere external cauſes.

The firſt ſtep, perhaps, towards obtaining this deſirable bias towards happineſs, is to gain a

perfect command over ſelf!—to put that buſy individual out of the queſtion, and then judge according to general conſequences and effects. Often, indeed, ſhould we then perceive that partial evil is general good; and finding this ſyſtem hold good in ſo many inſtances, we ſhould ſoon be led to conclude that it would do ſo in all, and that even thoſe very circumſtances which we had looked upon as unfortunate, would, in effect, prove a benefit to ourſelves. I cannot deny but that ſome fortunate beings ſeem to poſſeſs this happy conſtitution by the privilege of nature! Some there are who even from infancy appear to have laughed at the frowns of Fortune, and who have found every thing through life conduce to their felicity:—and ſurely a more fortunate diſpoſition no man can enjoy; nothing ought to be cultivated with more care than a temper which will enable a man to look with complacency on every accident he may meet with, and nothing ought to be more ſedulouſly diſcouraged than an inclination to view every thing through the darkeſt medium.

Optimus and Peſſimus were brothers—but brothers in blood alone, not in diſpoſition. Optimus, even in his ſwaddling clothes, was ſeldom or ever known to cry; and though they came into the world on the ſame day, Optimus ſmiled many weeks before his brother. Mothers, who know how

how truly engaging are the smiles of an infant, will not be surprised at the early preference the mother of these twins gave to Optimus; though she loved Pessimus also with a very tender affection, which indeed he seemed to require, for he was always crying, and she imagined he could not be in health.

In childhood, the same difference of disposition continued. Optimus was delighted with every new plaything, and seemed to receive amusement from every circumstance that occurred. A look of hilarity continually animated his face; he never seemed to make any particular search after Pleasure, but she came of her own accord, and presented herself to him. Pessimus, on the contrary, was seldom diverted, and never delighted; he looked on his playthings with scorn, threw them away in disgust, or gave them to Optimus; and then seeing how happy his brother was with them, cried to have them back again.

The parents of these boys both dying, their maternal grandfather, a man who had been a sailor, and who was pleased with the gay honesty of Optimus, adopted him, and declared his intention to provide for him. The old man was not rich, but the father of Optimus had died quite poor; it was therefore a fortunate circumstance

for the boy. Peffimus, however, was ftill more fortunate. An uncle, who had made a large fortune in a very refpectable mercantile line, and who had no children, took Peffimus into his houfe, initiated him into the myfteries of commerce, and, charmed with his ferious and reflecting turn, fo unufual in a young man, gave him every reafonable hope that he would make him his heir. Optimus, whom his grandfather could not fupport in idlenefs, went to fea, and had very few opportunities of cultivating much friendfhip with his brother, who, indeed, attended fo clofely to bufinefs, that he gave himfelf very little concern about any thing that paffed beyond the Royal Exchange. His uncle died, and all his mercantile concerns, all his extended intereft, devolved upon Peffimus. Riches flowed in upon him from every quarter of the world. He married a lovely and accomplifhed woman, who brought him a fine family of promifing children. He had a noble houfe in London, and a charming villa and paddock about twenty miles from it. No man was held in higher eftimation on 'Change than Peffimus; every bargain of confequence was offered to him—every difputed caufe was willingly fubmitted to his arbitration. Nothing, in fhort, feemed wanting to his happinefs: every thing fmiled—except Peffimus.

He

He one ſummer took his whole family into the weſt of England, to a beautiful and romantic watering-place, where they were all delighted with the adjacent country; and as Peſſimus could not ſpare ſo much time from buſineſs as his wife and children wiſhed to paſs in this delightful ſpot, he left them there, with a promiſe to return and fetch them at a ſtated period.

The ſudden influx of ſome unexpected buſineſs, however, detained him in town longer than the appointed time, and the weather was become gloomy, and occaſionally ſtormy before his return. The very night of his arrival there was a terrible ſtorm, and the morning brought with it an account that a ſhip had been wrecked on the rocks, and that the wretched crew had juſt eſcaped with their lives, and were coming to ſhore in the different boats that had gone out to their aſſiſtance. All the inhabitants and all the ſtrangers in the place flocked to the ſhore to ſee the landing of theſe unfortunate people, and amongſt the reſt Peſſimus and his family. He was making a ſerious and melancholy harangue on the vanity and inſtability of human purſuits, intermingled with many pathetic reflections on the lamentable ſituation of theſe poor ſufferers, which drew tears from the eyes of his auditors, when the firſt boat-full landed. Exclamations of joy and welcome

refounded on all sides; the drenched seamen were taken to different houses—the publicans tapped their best ale, and a general holiday seemed to be born.

"What insensible, unfeeling mortals!" cried Pessimus; "how is my pity thrown away on wretches who are not awakened to their own misery!"

He was proceeding in his philippic, when a second boatfull reached the shore; and as he surveyed the countenances of the individuals as they landed, one of them flew towards him with an exclamation of joy, crying to his comrades, "Did not I tell you I was a lucky dog?"

Pessimus gazed for a moment, and then opened his arms to receive his brother! A shower of sympathizing tears fell from his eyes at the condition in which he beheld Optimus—stripped to his checked shirt and trowsers, and apparently nothing saved from the wreck. He expressed his commiseration in the most pathetic terms, till Optimus interrupted him by saying—"Ah, you are the same Pessimus still! Reserve your pity for those who want it: for my part, brother, I am happy; and if you could but feel the delight of being safe on shore, when you had expected to be drowned, you

you would own I rather demand congratulation than pity!"

"Thou art the ftrangeft fellow!" exclaimed Peffimus; "haft not thou loft every thing?"

"Let's difcufs that at the inn," cried Optimus; "I feel I have not loft my appetite: I have not eaten thefe fixteen hours."

Peffimus lifted up his hands and eyes, accompanied his brother and his fellow-failors to the inn, faw them fall to moft heartily on a cold round of beef, and heard them exprefs their happinefs at their fafety in fo many different ways, that he felt fomething like a fenfation of envy arife in his bofom. After the hunger and thirft of the jovial crew were fatisfied, Peffimus took his brother home with him to his own lodgings, accommodated him with fome of his own apparel, and defired to hear his ftory.

"Nay," faid Optimus, "tell me firft what fituation I find you in. How are you going on in the world?"

Peffimus, who always felt a relief in giving vent to complaint, explained to his brother the ftate of his affairs, and defcanted at large on the uncertainty of all mercantile connections, the fre-

quency of bankruptcies, the untoward posture of public events, the alarming state of the popular mind, the increasing expences of a family, the difficulty of settling a number of children in eligible situations, the multiplicity of cares that harassed and oppressed him; and, in short, concluded with the confession that he was far from happy.

"I know not what thou wouldst have," replied Optimus. "I believe thou art sick of too much prosperity. I am sorry that, in circumstances apparently so fortunate, thou shouldst meet with any drawbacks on thy felicity. For my part, I have been a lucky dog all my life—I have no reason to complain of Fortune; but I'll tell thee my story.——When I went to live with my grandfather, the old gentleman was always talking so much about the pleasures of a sailor's life, that he soon inspired me with a desire of going to sea. I made two or three voyages under a friend of his, a Captain Harris; and a good seaman he was as ever reefed a sail. All order and discipline under him, I warrant ye! Well, poor fellow! he died of the yellow fever in the West Indies, and I succeeded to the command of the ship. It was at the end of this first voyage, as Captain, that I saw and fell in love with my Nancy; but her

her father was rich, and grandfather was poor. The old gentleman said *nay*; so I went another voyage. In this interval my grandfather died, and almost all he had, went with him. I had now nothing but my ship and my industry to depend upon; but I saw no reason why I should not do very well, and so I told my Nancy: but she was dutiful, as became a daughter; and though I own I wished to persuade her to marry me without her father's consent, yet I loved her the better for refusing, because an obedient daughter is sure to make a good wife. So I went out again. I made a pretty good voyage this time, and renewed my suit to the old gentleman; but he would not hear of it. He told me plainly, he designed his daughter for somebody else; but this, Nancy assured me in private, should never be. She said her father might have a right to refuse her to me, but nothing should make her give her hand to another, while her heart was mine. I bade her take courage, promised to be constant to her, and told her I doubted not but we should make it out right at last. I set sail again, and though I made but an indifferent voyage this time, [illegible] was a lucky one to me; for Nancy had caught the small-pox, and lost all her beauty. [illegible] father, who had been proud of her beauty, now told her she might marry her sailor, and be damned, if

she

she would; but an hundred pounds was all he would give her. The fortune he had meant for her should go to her sister, who was a pretty girl, but not so pretty as my Nancy had been. However, the money bought the girl a Lord for her husband, and when I came home, Nancy met me with tears in her eyes, and said she was going apprentice to a milliner, for she never would be my wife, changed as she was in person and in fortune. I dried up her tears, told her the change was a very lucky one, that I loved her better than ever, for that she had shewn me more of her goodness of heart. I had a great deal of trouble to persuade her now; but at last I succeeded, and never was there a better girl, or a better wife. The hundred pounds her father gave her, just set us up in a small house, and I had saved a little money upon the whole. I made some better voyages, and I was now coming home with great glee, because I hope to find my Nancy safely delivered of her fourth child. We don't live far from hence, brother, and you must pay us a visit, and [illegible] a happy couple we are. Now, though [illegible] have lost my ship, damme! I have no owners [illegible] account to; and what we have on shore is safe. [illegible] found wind and limb, and must set out a sailor again—that's all!"

At

At happiness so invincible in the midst of so many disappointments, Pessimus stared with astonishment. He went to his brother's house, however, saw his Nancy, and found her plain indeed from the ravages of the small-pox; but she had a face beaming with intelligence, and she welcomed Optimus with a smile that far counterbalanced his shipwreck. Pessimus made his brother Captain of one of his own ships, and more than reinstated his affairs on their former footing. More than this assistance Optimus would not accept; and Pessimus returned to his magnificent villa, his noble town-house, his increasing opulence, and his irreproachable character, to marvel at the cheerful felicity of his humble brother.

No. XXIV.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1800.

I SHALL present my readers with the following letter, without altering a syllable of it:—it is written with so genuine an expression of feeling, that it requires neither comment nor illustration.

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, ESQ.

Sir,

"I am one of the most miserable of human beings. I scarcely know what I propose by relating to you the circumstances of my case, for as I am the author of my own sorrows, I cannot lay any claim to your pity; and my situation

situation is so hopeless, I have not the most distant expectation of relief. To think of the happiness I have thrown from me, even now agonizes me; and to reflect that it is for ever beyond my reach, that my misery can no more admit of alleviation, than if the grave had closed over the possibility of repentance, drives me to despair.

"Oh Sir! when I married Mr. Eustace, it was in my power to have secured felicity far beyond the common lot of woman. I was beautiful, and my husband doted on me. I returned his love, and he deserved all my affection; for he was sensible, generous, and gentlemanly. A manly dignity governed all his manners—an inflexible honour ruled all his actions. No man had more exterior advantages than Mr. Eustace—no man had more grace in the little daily trifles of life—no man had more sprightliness and wit in conversation; I could not but see his superiority to all other men, and never for a moment did my heart fail of doing him full justice: no, amidst all my faults, I never could be suspected of preferring any man to him.

"Absolute perfection is not the lot of human nature. The fault of Mr. Eustace was a kind of jealousy of his inflexible dignity. I saw this fault, and feeling my own power, I determined to

thwart

thwart this single oblique propensity in every possible instance. To obtain the dominion I wished, I believed it necessary to conceal the extent of my tenderness for him; and Mr. Eustace, who had placed all his hopes of happiness on the mutual affection that was to subsist between himself and his wife, was chagrined to find that he could, by no means, obtain any rational or equal marks of attachment from me. I obliged him to purchase every concession on my side with some sacrifice on his of that favourite dignity which I had determined to mortify.—Oh, how I execrate the cold, unfeeling vanity that could excite me to a conduct so unworthy! I, who ought to have felt, nay (to render me still more guilty), who did feel the transcendent worth of my husband's character, who loved his person, and esteemed his virtues— I to persevere in a conduct which must have convinced him I was insensible alike to his merit and his tenderness! But I am punished, sufficiently punished. Conscious as I am of my guilt, I trust and believe my sufferings are adequate to it.

"Thus capriciously did I continue to exert my power till, by degrees, I alienated from me the love on which my power was built. Mr. Eustace, who at first had no more than a laudable consciousness of his own worth, became, through my villanous conduct, an imperious, implacable

tyrant. His very nature was changed, and I have to reproach myself, not only with having blasted his happiness, but with having debased his character. For my own part, all sense, all reflection were lost in the determination to conquer. I disdained no artifice, however petty, by which I could teaze him to compliance. He daily grew, however, more invulnerable to my efforts; and at last I could exhaust all my ingenuity without having the least effect on him.

"One day, when I had been vainly endeavouring to vanquish his inflexible dignity,—when tears, anger, and disdain had failed (I now never condescended to employ fondness), he addressed me with a solemn gravity—never shall I forget it! 'Maria,' said he, 'beware ere it is too late.— Not all your faults have yet made me cease to love you! but the time is almost arrived—tremble lest the moment should ever come, in which you may have to say—'I have lost the love of my husband!'

"Alas! alas! that fatal time is come! Would I had then listened to his advice—would I had then for ever laid aside the childish stratagems I made use of to subdue his inflexibility, and had awakened the tenderness I really felt for him, but which I had laid asleep by all the means in my power!

power! But I was infatuated—mad!—'Now,' thought I, 'is the time to confirm my power. He loves me ſtill, to madneſs loves me, and now, by a little dexterity, I may eſtabliſh my empire for ever. Alas! alas! I blindly ruſhed down the precipice, of which my huſband had warned me! Mr. Euſtace told me one morning he was going to be abſent a few days, but told me not whither he was going. The morning after he had left me, the following letter reached me.

'Maria! it is all over!—'Expoſtulation, argument, love have been exhauſted in vain. We make each other's miſery while we are together.—Maria! we meet no more! The houſe in ——ſhire, which was ſettled on you, is wholly and excluſively your's; but never more muſt you ſee my face, never more muſt we have any connection together! You ſhall hear from time to time that your daughter is well; but I cannot leave her under the tuition of a mother who will incapacitate her for giving or receiving happineſs.—Maria! we might, but for you—we might have been happy! Now, to be leſs miſerable is all that is left to

'FREDERIC EUSTACE.'

"Such

"Such was the heart-breaking letter I received. In two hours after the chaise appeared to convey me hither. My spirit, once so haughty, was sunk in a moment by that fatal letter. I obeyed in silence, hoping that my perfect submission might work some change for me in the bosom of my husband! All my love for him revived with double force. I remembered all his former affection—his long-suffering; I persuaded myself that after a time I should perhaps regain his heart, but I reasoned on false principles. I soon found that all application to him, either by direct or indirect means, was of no avail. My letters, by whatever channel conveyed, were constantly returned unopened; and I find that the man who was once at my feet, is indeed inflexible towards me!

"Six years have elapsed since I quitted the roof of my husband. Six years of melancholy widowhood have I spent, in unavailing tears, and in dreadful reflections on the merit of the jewel I have thus thrown from me. In all that time I have never once seen my daughter, though I have heard of her welfare. She is now fifteen, and will soon take that place in her father's house I have forfeited. What can she think of her unhappy mother? She perhaps brands me with,

what is commonly thought, more atrocious guilt than I have incurred; but I have made ſuch ſerious reflections in my melancholy ſolitude, that I ſcarcely can believe any miſconduct more utterly deſtructive of peace of mind than that I unhappily purſued.

"Oh, if my Euſtace ſhould ſee this letter!—If he ſhould recogniſe his once-loved Maria in the former part of it—if he ſhould give credit to the profeſſions of my repentance, perhaps, though he might never reinſtate me in the place I have ſo deſervedly forfeited, he might extend his forgiveneſs to as true a penitent as ever breathed. Alas! alas! to ſay that my love for him was never for a moment extinct, ſeems to aggravate my crime; for, by what wrong principles muſt that heart have been guided, that could ſo totally change the nature of love, as to uſe it for an inſtrument of tyranny!

"But I need ſay no more! I have no hope for myſelf. Mr. Euſtace has, in his abſence, regained that tranquillity of mind he ſo truly merits. He will not ſuffer the remembrance of his loſt Maria to deſtroy that peace; but if my fatal example ſhould warn one beautiful tyrant how ſhe dares to trifle with the affections of a worthy man,

man, I ſhall not in vain have inflicted on myſelf the puniſhment of recalling my miſconduct and my ſufferings.

"I am, Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"MARIA."

No. XXV.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1800.

IT is not without diffidence that I enter on the taſk of Criticiſm. To form a good critic, I am well aware that no ſmall variety or excellence of talents is requiſite. A ſound judgment, a delicate taſte, a quick perception of beauty, a fertile invention, and a good ear,—but, above all, a good heart, ſhould combine to form a perfect critic.

Hark! do I not hear fome one exclaiming, "Good Mr. Saunter, you have at leaft one requifite which you have not enumerated—a fufficient fhare of vanity!" But, gentle reader, have patience; I do not pretend to be a perfect critic! yet I can fee that a man is not qualified to criticife what he has not ability to underftand,—that no man thoroughly underftands what he cannot, in fome degree, execute,—that he who has not equal readinefs in perceiving the beautiful as the abfurd, can never be fit for a critic,—and that, above all, he muft not only have judgment to comprehend, and tafte to felect in general, but that peculiar and verfatile tafte which enables

> "A perfect judge "to" read each work of wit
> "With the fame fpirit that the author writ."

The province of criticifm varies with the performance to be criticifed. In fmaller works it is neceffary to attend to the exquifite polifh, the perfect harmony, the high finifh of every individual part. In productions of greater magnitude, the general fcope fhould be firft confidered, and the co-operation of the parts to the main defign: where this is perfect, incidental failures of inferior confequence fhould by no means attract ftrong cenfure. I prefume that in a Sonnet, any offence againft legitimacy of ftructure, harmony

harmony of verfion, or elegance of expreffion, is punifhable as a capital crime in the high Court of Criticifm. After all that has been faid and written lately on thofe meritorious performances, any error muft be an unpardonable blemifh. So be it: it is not to Sonnets I am going to call the attention of my readers. I acknowledge the high merits of thofe who can conquer fo many difficulties as the arbitrary lawgivers of poefy have thrown in the way of Sonnetteers: they often remind me of the horfe-fhoes reverfed nailed at the doors of cottages, to impede the entrance of thofe redoubtable beings, called Witches.

I may, perhaps, hereafter, in imitation of every writer of the prefent age, prefent my readers with a critical paper on Sonnet-writing; but the object of to-day is Tragedy, and that Tragedy, Count Bafil.

I may, perhaps, not proceed *fecundum artem* in this examination. I am not going to enquire into the violation of, or adherence to, the critical unities. The piece before us, like each of the plays in this volume, demands a higher ftyle of infpection than that which confines itfelf to rules of compofition or of harmony. It is a part of a great, a ftupendous whole, which if ever completed, and completed in a ftyle equal to the

ſpecimen already given, will be a glorious monument of Genius, and redound to the honour of the age and country in which it was conceived and undertaken.

The profeſſed object of this play is to depict the paſſion of Love; and as, in a moral diſplay of a paſſion, it is neceſſary that its moſt remarkable effects ſhould be brought to light, the victim of this powerful feeling is not a man new to beauty, or unacquainted with the world,—not one who waſtes the ſeaſon of youth in indolent luxury, or enervating refinements, but a Soldier, a General, and a Conqueror,—one of ſo ſerious and ſevere a turn of mind, that he is repreſented as having cautioned his elder friend on ſome former occaſion, not to be

> " ——— caught with ſome gay dame,
> " To laugh and ogle, and beſool thyſelf—
> " It is offenſive in the public eye,
> " And ſuits not with a man of thy endowments."

Such is Count Baſil, the hardy warrior, the practiſed chieftain, who is on his march, with his veteran troops, after ſome ſucceſsful battles, to join his Emperor. And Roſinberg well remarks

> " To men like this,
> " If Love ſhould come, he comes no eaſy gueſt!"

This

This man, of a character so austere and warlike, so unyielding in all matters of command, is chosen for the victim of Love, and he is captivated by the beautiful Victoria, who has in her, all the playful wiles and capricious freaks so often ascribed to her sex. She sees her power over the rugged soldier; and, intoxicated with the consciousness of it, determines to exert it to the utmost, even against his better judgment.

Of the progress of the action we will take notice as we advance; at present we are only to attend to the progress of the passion. The troops under Count Basil halt for the Princess and her ladies to pass onward to a Church, where she goes to offer gifts for the recovery of her father:—the interview therefore is merely momentary. The crowd, who had gathered together to view the procession, disperse, and Basil and some officers remain. Basil remains silent, while the others talk of the procession and the other ladies, and the richness of the gifts Victoria bore "in so white a hand." The mention of her hand draws a scornful remark from Basil, that he had not seen *her hand!*—This is all he says, while the others remain gaily talking on; and, by the bye, it is but fair to remark, with a richer variety of conversation than is to be met with in any dramatic author, Shakespeare alone excepted.—Basil is now left with his friend Rosinberg, who tries to draw

U 4 from

from him the cause of his thoughtfulness. He has been slow to speak; but once begun, he grows eloquent and verbose, and alarms Rosinberg with an impetuosity unusual to his character. He tries, however, to persuade Rosinberg that he means to have no mistress but War; still, notwithstanding, he lingers to give the orders to the troops to march, and seems to wish to stay yet at Mantua. Rosinberg again remarks the newness of this love of delay. Basil hints that the cause of it is not novel, but explains himself no further. He however determines to go to Court, and speak no more of Victoria. At Court, in the midst of a conference with the Duke of Mantua, Basil becomes suddenly confused on the entrance of Victoria, and yields to her entreaties to stay another day in Mantua, though he knows the necessity there is for promptitude in his march to Pavia. He now avows to Rosinberg that this passion has been the inmate of his bosom for two years, when he accidentally assisted her in the dangers of the chace. He then argues on the noble nature of love like a lover—

"Yes, yes, my friend, but 'tis a noble weakness;
"A weakness which hath greater things achiev'd
"Than all the firm, determin'd strength of reason.
"By Heaven! I feel a new-born pow'r within me
"Shall make me twenty-fold the man I've been
"Before this fated day!"

The

The fair Victoria too, in a conversation with her ladies, shews a full consciousness of the power of love. Victoria is, perhaps, in tragedy, a character perfectly original. The sprightliness of her sex and age, the caprice of her disposition, and an inherent vanity too apparent, often cloud over the real goodness of her heart, and shew her far from the faultless heroine of the stage! The ingenuousness, however, with which she acknowledges and laments the faults her inconsiderate and fantastic habits lead her into, renders her at once a singular, an amiable, and an interesting character.

Her speech on the universal power of love is too beautiful not to be inserted:—the language, the modulation are so appropriate to the subject, and to the character of Victoria.

"Oh! Love will master all the power of art!
"Aye, all! and she who never has beheld
"The polish'd courtier, or the tuneful sage
"Become a very native, simple swain,
"Before the glances of her conqu'ring eye,
"Has only vulgar charms!
"To make the cunning artless, tame the rude,
"Subdue the haughty, shake th' undaunted soul,

"Yea,

"Yea, put a bridle in the lion's mouth,
"And lead him forth as a domestic cur,
"These are the triumphs of all-pow'rful Beauty!
"Did nought but flattering words and tuneful praise,
"Sighs, tender glances, and obsequious service,
"Attend her presence, it were nothing worth.
"I'd put a white coif o'er my braided locks,
"And be a plain, good, simple fireside dame."

The motive which induces Basil to stay longer at Mantua, is so apparent, that it raises a spirit of discontent among his soldiers. The report is whispered among them that the rival armies are so near, that a battle is hourly expected; and an envious officer stirs up the spirit of mutiny among them. This is not, however, known at first to Basil, who is at a masquerade given by the Princess, where he endeavours for a long while to discover her, but without success;—at length he meets with her, and she talks to him, without letting him know who she is: after which finding that it was Victoria, he pursues her, and makes several disjointed petitions for her love; he can, however, obtain no more than her avowal that she cannot hate him. When the assembly is over, he loiters in the garden watching the lights in her chamber window, while Rosinberg and two other

other officers are seeking him anxiously, to inform him of the now open [illegible]tiny. While they are yet waiting for him, he enters, and learns the affair with much indignant sorrow. He goes to the army, and dismiss[illegible]g his friends with an heroic calmness, harangues the soldiers alone. He disbands them, [illegible]d after having made them feel their fault, [illegible]mmands them to lay down their arms, which they all obey. So far th[illegible] circumstance remi[illegible] of [illegible]ebellion similarly quelled in ancien[illegible] He then, however, allows those who still wish to follow him, to resum[illegible] their arms, and all, to a man, prove their willingness. His conduct through this scene is that of a firm, judicious, and unyielding commander, and serves to prove still more the tyrannical nature of that passion which can turn such a min[illegible] aside from the narrow path of duty.—An[illegible]nstance is to display still more stro[illegible] the [illegible]periority of this feeling in his bos[illegible] to every o[illegible]er, for he quarrels with his fri[illegible]d and kinsman, Rosinberg, who [illegible]ves to persuade him to leave [illegible]ntua; nay, he even turns the counsel of a good [illegible] Court, who has been advising Rosinberg [illegible] draw him from Mantua, into a proof of the love the Princess felt for him, rather supposing that the Countess Albini feared his influence over Victoria, than that she really saw any danger

that

that awaited him. Roſinberg exclaims moſt truly—

> " O Baſil! I could laugh to ſee thy folly,
> " But that thy weakneſs doth provoke me ſo;
> " Moſt admirable, brave, determin'd man!
> " So well, ſo lately try'd, what art thou now?"

But Baſil is not to be won from his purpoſe of lingering near Victoria, and diſdaining all friendſhip with the man who would drag him thence. Roſinberg, in the bitterneſs of his affliction, and the warmth of his zeal, determines to pretend ſickneſs, and then he ſays—

> " And yet I ſhall not feign,
> " For thy unkindneſs makes me ſick indeed!
> " It will be ſaid that Baſil tarried here
> " To ſave his friend; and ſo they'll call me ſtill!
> " Nor will diſhonour fall upon thy name
> " For ſuch a kindly deed."

This melts Baſil into tears, and he conſents to leave Mantua; but his reflections ſhew the depth and fervency of his paſſion.

> " Mine after-life! What is mine after-life?
> " My day is cloſ'd! the gloom of night is come!
> " A hopeleſs

"A hopeless darkness settles o'er my fate!
"I've seen the last look of her heav'nly eyes,
"I've heard the last sounds of her blessed voice;
"I've seen her fair form from my sight depart!
"My doom is closed!"

The pity of Rosinberg sooths but little so deep a melancholy, and the entrance of Isabella with a request from the Princess that Basil would join the chace with her, in a moment destroys his resolution, and he goes instantly to the place where he is told he may see Victoria. She leads him into a retired walk, and quitting their horses, they converse together. Here Basil, as if unconsciously, repeats the very words of the Princess, till she notices it. She then with a childish artifice (not inconsistent with the whole of her character) raises the jealousy of the Count, by alluding to a dear friend who had loved his path. When she has irritated his passions, she acknowledges that she alluded to her brother. She leaves him to speak to her attendant, and he looks fondly after her, watching her every motion, and marking even the folds into which the wind raises her light garment. This dream of love, however, is now suddenly broken by the arrival of a messenger from the army, with intelligence that the armies had met, and fought, and that the Emperor

Emperor had gained the victory—without the aſſiſtance of Baſil,—adding,

"Piſcaro ſent me to inform Count Baſil
"He needs not now his aid, and gives him leave
"To march his tardy troops to diſtant quarters."

Baſil replies,

"He ſays ſo, does he? Well, it ſhall be ſo.
"I will to quarters, narrow quarters go,
"Whence voice of war ſhall rouſe [illegible] no more!"

He here departs in haſte, and Victoria returning, the meſſenger announces his intelligence to her. She feels keenly the error of her conduct, and exclaims—

"What have I [illegible]? I've fool'd a noble heart,
"I've wreck'd a brave man's honour!"

The limits of my paper will not allow me to examine the progreſs of the paſſion through the fifth act of the play; but that, and a ſuccinct account of many other beauties not yet enlarged upon, will form a pleaſing ſubject for another Number. Hitherto I have confined my remarks ſolely to thoſe incidents, which ſhewed the hold this imperious paſſion had taken of the "noble

heart" of Count Basil: nor do I hold it any diminution of the peculiar merit of this Play, that this principal incident on which the catastrophe turns, is borrowed from Marmontel's Tale of the Shepherdess of the Alps. It is well known that our immortal Shakspeare cared not from what muddy source he drew the plots of his dramas. The stream of his poetry, the limpid current of nature, was sure to flow bright and pure; and the affecting tale I have alluded to may well be allowed a sufficient basis for the catastrophe of a tragedy. Nothing could more strongly point out the force of love, than that such a man as Count Basil, who had hitherto "woo'd only the stern mistress War," should risk his honour to please the caprices of a woman. After all, it is very possible the imitation is wholly unconscious. An idea of the kind often remains upon the mind, and induces a species of imitation, which can, however, hardly be justly termed so. Events are a sort of universal property to authors, and every one is at liberty to draw on the grand bank at pleasure.

No. XXVI.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1800.

(Criticism on Count Basil continued.)

WE are now arrived at the fifth act of Basil, where there only remains the last regrets of his love, and the despair of his honour. The alternate predominancy of these two exquisite feelings are admirably portrayed in a soliloquy spoken by the Count, in a scene well imagined for heightening the effect of his sentiments—a dark night—a church-yard which looks upon Victoria's apartment in the palace. The consciousness of his fault presses hard upon his noble heart. He ventures forth

"Like some unblessed creature of the night."

Envies

envies the dead, who sleep at peace by their kindred,

> " While I, like a vile outcast of my kind,
> " In some lone spot must lay my unburied corse!"

thus pointing out his resolution to end his despair with his own hand. Yet the reflection on his former fame naturally occurs to his mind, and doubles his present misery—

> " Oh cursed wretch!
> " I' the fair and honour'd field shouldst thou have died,
> " Where brave friends, proudly smiling thro' their tears,
> " Had pointed out the spot where Basil lay!"

Here a light seen in Victoria's window drives every thing from his mind but love of her. He gazes on her shadow as he sees it move—

> " E'en darkly imag'd thus,
> " How lovely is that form!
> " To be so near thee, and for ever parted!
> " For ever lost! What art thou now to me?
> " Shall the departed gaze on thee again?
> " Shall I glide past thee in the midnight hour,
> " Whilst thou perceiv'st it not, and think'st, perhaps,
> " 'Tis but the mournful breeze that passes by?"

The mournful idea in these last three lines is uncommonly poetical. The figure of Victoria here disappears, and the light in her window is seen no more. He now exclaims, having taken his last look of her—

> "I am no more a being of this world!
> "Farewel, farewel! all now is dark for me!
> "Come, fated deed! come, horror and despair!
> "Here lies my dreadful way!"

He is here interrupted by Geoffry, an old maimed soldier, to whom he had before shewn singular honour. The old man attempts to hold him, saying pathetically,

> "Oh! do not go! I've but one hand to hold thee!"

to which Basil replies, with that mixture of levity and tenderness found perhaps only in nature and Shakespeare,

> "Two would not hold so well, old honour'd vet'ran!"

This species of pathetic playfulness, so natural to great minds in distress, is seldom seized by writers, certainly only by those who have not only exquisite feeling, but uncommonly good

judgment of the human heart. Determined, however, to execute that purpofe which, alone, in his opinion, can hide his difgrace, he breaks violently from old Geoffry, and goes away.—We next fee him in a wild and favage wood, near the entrance of a cave. Here he deliberates on that ftate he is going to plunge into, and refolves that he can bear eternal mifery better than difgrace! The whole foliloquy is fine, but concludes with a moft natural irrefolution of judgment, though firmnefs in action.—

"I'll think no more,—it turns my dizzy brain!
"It is too late to think!—what muft be, muft be!
"I cannot live, therefore I needs muft die!"

He now remarks the cavern, and determines to make that his fepulchre, enters it, and the noife of a piftol announces the fatal deed! The report draws together his friend Rofinberg and others. Rofinberg inftantly concludes what has happened. They go to feek another entrance to the cavern, and the infide of it is then fhewn, with Bafil lying bleeding on the ground. His friends enter; and covering his face, he tries to efcape from them. Rofinberg conjures him by every tie of friendfhip and kindred, but Bafil replies—

"Shame knows no kindred! I am fall'n, difgrac'd!
"My fame is gone—I cannot look upon thee!"

Rosinberg vainly endeavours to comfort him, and Basil confesses, with a candour worthy of his great soul, that he has

"Oft-times usurp'd it o'er his better worth,
"Most vainly teaching where he should have learn'd."

Yet even in moments so awful, the remembrance of Victoria clings to his heart. He names her, and Rosinberg, who feels that to her is owing the present fatal catastrophe, curses her.—Basil then says—

"It doubles unto me the stroke of death
"To hear thee name her thus. Oh curse her not!
"The fault is mine!"

He then beseeches Rosinberg to fulfil his last request, and having obtained his promise, says—

"See her when I am gone—be gentle with her,
"And tell her that I bless'd her in my death,
"E'en in mine agonies I lov'd and bless'd her."

The grief of the soldiers for their commander, the last moments of Basil, and the conduct of the principal characters admirably kept distinct from each other, render this a well-wrought and most affecting scene. Victoria now enters, and by her grief

grief for Basil, disarms our anger for her childish and capricious conduct. Even Rosinberg, who begins by upbraiding, finishes by pitying her.

I have pursued the great outline of the play, without stopping to notice any other merits than the steadiness and accuracy with which the grand point is attended to—the power and progress of love in a mind noble, thoughtful, and great like Basil's. It appears to me that this design is well executed; and though perhaps more time may be consumed in this play than is allowed by strict dramatic rules,—though perhaps the scenes may follow too abruptly, and though even some of the incidents be not original, its merit is of a kind so distinct from either of these particulars, that we cannot hesitate to pronounce it far superior to most modern plays.

That our immortal Shakespeare was far more careless in each of the particulars above alluded to, no one attempts to deny; nor can we help acknowledging that in more correct writers we seek in vain for the lively interest he creates in our hearts. We think not of the writer, but of the actors,—not as actors, but as human beings really in those circumstances. And the writer of these plays certainly approaches more nearly to the same

 effect

effect on the reader than any modern dramatic author.

It now remains to point out a few more circumstances, which were omitted purposely not to interrupt the progress of the main design. In unity of action, far more important than the unities of time and place, this play is eminently correct. The grand incident is the triumph obtained by Love over Honour in the breast of a soldier of no common martial merit; and to the heightening and illustrating this point, every circumstance in the play, though seeming at first sight foreign to the purpose, most artfully contributes.

The first appearance of old Geoffry, a distinguished character, and as far as I can recollect, an original one, tends to exalt the beauty of Victoria, by having drawn an old veteran from his peaceful retirement to gaze on it; and though, with the natural feeling of age, he thinks her inferior in that respect to her mother, the circumstance yet serves to prove how high her reputation for beauty deservedly stood. The episode of Mirando, a little orphan, caressed by the Princess, is introduced to prove her benevolence; but the best testimony to her amiable qualities is the avowal of

of the Countess Albini when Victoria wishes she could love her as she did her mother—

> "And do I not?—All-perfect as she was,
> "I know not that she went so near my heart
> "As thou, with all thy faults."

The episode of Mirando is perhaps the least well done of any thing in this play; though not absolutely unnatural, it is uninteresting. But every thing relating to old Geoffry is highly impressive. An old maimed soldier, neglected by his Prince, yet retaining all the sense of honour that fires the warlike bosom, from the first moment that he appears, when, with peculiar felicity of expression, one of the citizens calls him

> "Old remnant of the wars,"

to his last appearance with Basil, affection and esteem go with Geoffry. The contrast between Frederick and Basil in their conduct towards the old veteran, is finely marked; as is also the contrast between true valour and headlong fearlessness in the following speech of Rosinberg, when Frederick has said—

> "Fear is a name for something in the mind,
> "But what, from inward sense I cannot tell.
> "I could as little anxious march to battle,
> "As when a boy to childish games I ran!

Rosa. "Then as much virtue hast thou in thy valour,
"As, when a child, thou hadst in childish play.
"The brave man is not he who feels no fear,
"For that were stupid and irrational—
"But he, whose noble soul its fear subdues,
"And bravely dares the danger nature shrinks from!"

The pardon afterwards granted by Basil to Frederick for his concern in the mutiny, reminds one of Henry of Navarre's reconciliation with Sully.

Basil raising Frederick from the ground—

"Forbear, forbear!—See where our friends approach!
"They must not think thee suing for a pardon—
"That would disgrace us both!"

It is surely no blame to heighten thus the force of most admirable sentiments by using incidents so striking. The language throughout this play is rather strong than metaphorical. Harmony is less studied than appropriation, and perhaps the earnest endeavours of most modern poets after harmony and ornament, have bereft their works of that impressive force, so far superior to all the tinsel of poetry. It is impossible not to feel moved by corresponding sentiments by reading merely

marily any detached fpeech. Rosinberg, talking to Baff of the mutiny, fays,—

"There's treafon in this moft deceitful Court
"Againft thee plotting—and this morning's tumult
"Hath been its damning effect."

To which Baff, with the generous fearleffnefs of a noble mind, replies,—

"Poo, poo, my friend!
"The nature of man's mind too well thou know'ft,
"To judge as vulgar, hoodwink'd ftatefmen do,
"Who, ever with their own poor wiles infected,
"Believe each popular tumult or commotion
"Muft be the work of deep-laid policy!
"Poor, mean, mechanic fouls, who little know
"A few fhort words of energetic force,
"Some powerful paffion on the fudden rous'd,
"The animating fight of fomething noble,
"Some fond trait of the memory finely wak'd,
"A found, a fimple fong without defign,
"In revolutions, tumults, wars, rebellions,
"All grand events, have oft effected more
"Than deepeft cunning of their paltry art!"

Perhaps the words "Poo! poo!" are unworthy of the ufual dignity of the Tragic Mufe; but

this

this author, by bringing the characters more to the level of real life, has created more lively interest than all the high-flown heroics of other dramatists. When passion animates and agitates the mind, then the language becomes justly more elevated, more poetical. Take from the same scene the following lines :—

Bas. " Oh, were I conscious that within her breast
" I held some portion of her dear regard,
" Tho' pent for life within a prison's walls,
" Where thro' my grate I yet might sometimes see
" E'en but her shadow sporting in the sun—
" Tho' plac'd by Fate where some obstructing bound,
" Some deep impassable between us roll'd,
" And I might yet from some high towering cliff,
" Perceive her distant mansion from afar,
" Or mark its blue smoke rising eve and morn—
" Nay, tho' within the circle of the moon
" Some spell did fix her, never to return,
" And I might wander in the hours of night,
" And upward turn mine ever-gazing eye,
" Fondly to mark upon its varied disk,
" Some little spot that might her dwelling be—
" My fond, my fixed heart would still adore,
" And own no other love! Away, away!
" How canst thou say to one who loves like me,
" Thou hast no hope!"

The

The ſcene in which Baſil harangues his mutinous troops, is a ſpecimen of eloquence not often to be equalled, and his character diſtinctly ſpeaks in every line. That jealouſy of honour, which hereafter impels him to ſuicide—that firmneſs and ſtrength of mind, invincible to danger, to be conquered only by love,—and a ſort of martial ruggedneſs of ſoul, which is ſeen in his general reluctance to yield to the ſofter feelings inſpired by the eyes of Victoria, are all diſtinctly portrayed in his ſpeeches to his rebellious ſoldiery.—The other characters of importance are alſo well kept up. For the inferior plot of treachery carried on between the father of Victoria and a plotting Miniſter, little need be ſaid; it was perhaps neceſſary to vary the ſcene, and is as well managed as all neceſſary parts of a play uſually are—that is, in a ſtyle inferior to thoſe ſcenes where the intereſt warms and carries away the author to a juſt and true ſpirit of poeſy.

Victoria's character is admirably ſuſtained; ſhe is, through the whole piece, a lively, feeling, and naturally amiable being; but ſo ſpoiled by a childiſh vanity, and an inſatiate thirſt after power, that ſhe is continually offending even her own better judgment. Her

lamentation over the corse of Basil is affecting from its candour—

"For he lov'd me in thoughtless folly lost,
"With all my faults, most worthless of his love!"

Perhaps the words

"The gallant and the brave,"

however applicable they may be to Count Basil, remind the reader too nearly of Lady Randolph's pathetic apostrophe to her murdered Douglas—

"My beautiful, my brave!"

but this is a trifling fault, nor am I disposed to search for more such. Should any of my readers be seized with an uncontroulable curiosity to discover more such blemishes in this interesting part of a noble plan, I must beg leave to refer them to the book itself.

No. XXVII.

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1800.

FOR the entertainment of my readers, I shall to-day present them with the following poem.

SIR ELMER,

A LEGENDARY TALE.

" WHAT means yon mouldering heap of earth
" Beneath yon blasted oak ?
" And what those piles of human bones
" That whiten on the rock ?

" Why does no shrub adorn the place
" With vegetation green ?
" And why does every living thing
" Avoid the dreary scene ?"—

" It

"If thou wouldst know," the seer reply'd,
"The secret of the place,
"Thither, at midnight's solemn hour
"Thy lonely steps retrace.

"And haply, if within thy breast,
"Undaunted courage glow,
"To thee it may be given to trace
"Its mystery of woe!"—

"Wilt thou be there," the Knight enquir'd,
"My wandering steps to guide?"
"To one alone the deed belongs!"
The reverend seer reply'd.

Pondering in silent awe, the youth
His former way return'd,
And much he marvell'd—and his heart
With sacred fervour burn'd.

Within a ruin'd Abbey's tower
The interval he spent—
And forth he stray'd at dark midnight,
On bold adventure bent!

Thro' the dull night no favouring moon
Bestow'd a radiant gleam,
Nor sought one little star to cast
Its shadow in the stream.

Boy

But thick and driving clouds obscure
The azure vault of heaven;
And thunder, in repeated peals,
Along its arch was driven.

Young Elmer plung'd his quickening steed
Deep in his milk-white stud—
He sought to cross the barren heath
With more than usual speed.

But the blue lightning's arrowy flash
Flash'd right across his way,
And at his feet a rifted pine
In cumbrous ruin lay.

In vain Sir Elmer strove to guide
His wild affrighted horse,
For to the destin'd spot no skill
The trembling beast could force.

Yet all-undaunted Elmer leaves
His courser's panting sides;
And forward to the turfy mound
Advanc'd with hasty strides.

And now the flaming heavens appear
One dreadful sheet of fire,
Nearer the crashing thunder rolls,
Yet will he not retire.

The deep-ton'd tone disclos'd the spot
  Where rose the lofty mound—
Where ghastly wav'd the blasted oak,
  And bones lay whitening round.

But now, no more the hollow wind
  In loud defiance spoke;
No lightning glar'd—nor following quick,
  No crashing thunder broke.

But awful stillness thro' the air
  Unwonted horror shed—
Uncommon darkness wrapp'd the sky,—
  Young Elmer shook with dread!

Yet on with ardent haste he pass'd
  To reach the crumbling mound
But lo!—a sudden cavern yawn'd
  Where late the rock had frown'd.

And in its deep sepulchral breast
  A trembling flame he spy'd,
Whose glare disclos'd a deathlike form,
  A dagger in its side!

All horror-struck while Elmer gaz'd,
  Slowly the figure rose,
And, by some power superior, broke
  The grave's profound repose.

[illegible] the form
A martial ſemblance wore,
And down the ſhining metal flow'd
A ſtream of purple gore.

On Elma now he bent his eye
With anxious looks of woe!
And thrice he groan'd, and thrice anew
The blood began to flow.

His voice was like th' impriſon'd fires
That rock the frighted ground;
And Egbert's ſoul recoil'd to hear
[illegible] ſound!

"What can I do," appall'd, he ſaid,
"To give thy ſpirit reſt?"—
"Avenge my death!" the ſpectre cry'd,
And bar'd his bleeding breaſt.

"On whom?—and why?" the youth enquir'd.
"On Hubert [illegible],
"And when thou ſtrik'ſt his villain heart,
"Say Egbert arm'd thy hand."—

"How can I raiſe my arm," he ſaid,
"Againſt my patron kind?
"How can I dare to ſeek his life,
"And bear no cauſe aſſign'd?"—

"Blood calls for blood," the ſhade reply'd,
"I fell beneath his ſword;
"And juſtly thou may'ſt ſtrike the blow—
"Believe a father's word!"—

"My father then!" the youth exclaim'd;
But ſudden from his view
The ſhade was vaniſh'd—in a flame
Of pale ſulphureous blue.

Torn with impatience ſtood the Knight,
His inmoſt ſoul on fire,
And with impetuous voice exclaim'd
Upon his vaniſh'd ſire!

In vain he call'd—in vain he pray'd,
No ſire appear'd again;
And early dawn began to gleam
Acroſs the barren plain!

Back then to Hubert's proud abode
The youth his footſteps bent;
Yet to the ground his head declin'd
On wildering thoughts intent.

Strange was the tale, and ſtrange the means
By which the tale was told;
Yet it compell'd his faith, and all
His ſhivering blood ran cold!

" What means that pensive look of woe?"
Old Hubert kindly said,
" Say, is thy cheek from anger pale,
" Or else by fear dismay'd?"—

" No pallid rage," Sir Elmer said,
" Sits low'ring on my brow;
" Nor is it fear!—I trust in Heaven,
" Fear I shall never know!"—

He spoke, and strove his head to raise,
And often strove to smile;
But tho' it dimpled on his cheek,
His bosom ach'd the while!

And when the gleam of evening shone
All radiant in the west,
Fair Emma met him in the bower,
An unexpected guest.

And much she try'd with soothing art
To win him from his woe;
But as he gaz'd upon the maid,
His bitter tears would flow!

" Vain are your soothings, lovely maid,
" To ease this bursting heart;
" And vain are all our vows of love,—
" We must for ever part!"—

"[illegible] thy [illegible]!
"The castle [illegible];
"And are then all thy plighted vows
"Forgotten or betray'd?"—

"Oh never, never," sigh'd the youth,
"Can I inconstant be!
"Sweet maid, this wretched heart would break
"To prove its truth to thee!

"But cruel duties now demand
"My undivided soul—
"Tremendous duties, which my lips
"Must faithfully controul!"—

Hubert's fair daughter vainly strove
The fatal tale to gain;
From Elmer's agonizing breast
No word could she obtain!

And when at night upon his couch
His feverish limbs he toss'd,
He felt his reason and his faith
In wild disorder lost.

"Can that be counted just and good,
"Which can such deeds require—
"Which bids me seek my patron's life,
"And murder Emma's sire!

"It must not be!—strange demon, begone!
  "Some demon met my view,
"And sought to lure me to my harm,
  "With visions most untrue!

"No, Hubert, no!—thy Elmer's hand
  "Thy life shall never seek!
"No, Emma, no! no deed of mine
  "Shall bathe with tears thy cheek!"

Instant, beside his restless couch
  The martial shade appear'd!
And, with a frown, his outstretch'd arm
  In threatening guise uprear'd.

And on the hapless youth he cast
  Dark furious looks of rage!
And Elmer sought, with earnest words,
  His anger to assuage!

"Take then this sword, and plunge it deep
  "In Hubert's villain breast!
"Thy father's blood has stain'd the blade!
  "Obey the stern behest!"

Vanish'd the spirit into air,
  The sword remain'd behind,
And new and strong conviction gleam'd
  Upon Sir Elmer's mind.

He roſe, and graſp'd the fatal ſteel,
    And Hubert's chamber ſought!
" What—ſhall I ſtrike him as he ſleeps?
    " Avaunt, unworthy thought!

" Yet, can I bear to hear him plead,
    " And beg his life of me?
" Oh Hubert, Hubert! ſooner far
    " Would I be ſlain by thee!"—

But lo! the ſight that met his eye!
    Old Hubert, kneeling, pray'd
Before a marble tomb, where high
    Was Egbert's name diſplay'd!

The Knight remain'd in ſilence near,
    And mark'd his tears and ſighs;
And ſoftening floods of pity ran
    Inceſſant from his eyes.

The Baron roſe, and wonder'd much
    To ſee Sir Elmer ſtand,
Tears courſing down his face, and drawn,
    The weapon in his hand.

" Know'ſt thou this ſword?" Sir Elmer ſaid,
    " Know'ſt thou this bloody ſtain?
" 'Tis Egbert's ſword! 'tis Egbert's blood!
    " And thou haſt Egbert ſlain!"—

" Yes,

" Yes, Heaven is juft !" the Baron cry'd,
" The Chief was flain by me !
" And willingly I yield my life,
" Oh [illegible]'s fon ! to thee !

" Vain is the hope by ruthlefs deeds
" To purchafe wealth and peace !
" Oh welcome, Death !—for this remorfe
" With thee alone fhall ceafe !

" Yet, ere I clofe my eyes for aye,
" Let me my tale reveal ;
" And haply thy too pitying breaft
" To juft revenge 'twill fteel !

" Thy fire and I, in early youth,
" For the fame damfel ftrove ;
" I gain'd the wealthy fire's confent—
" He won Elfrida's love !

" To him fhe gave her fecret faith,
" (Ah—could I bear to fee !) ;
" And fhelter'd from her hoftile fire,
" She crown'd his hopes with thee !

" By paffion ftung, by envy fir'd,
" I ftruck his kindred breaft ;
" And of his confort and his lands
" Became at once poffefs'd !

"Pitying I faw thy helplefs youth,
"And rear'd loft Egbert's fon!
"Yet would I ne'er thy name reveal,
"Nor yield the wealth I'd won!

"Could I by fuch avow'd blaft
"My long-eftablifh'd fame?
"Or fuch a direful ftigma caft
"On my unblemifh'd name?

"Yet I defign'd, whene'er high Heaven
"Me to the grave fhould call,
"To certify thy noble birth,
"And yield thy treafures all!

"But yet thy father's angry fprite
"Oft hovers o'er my bed,
"And fheds alarming vifions round,
"And fhakes my foul with dread.

"And fair Elfrida funk beneath
"The unexpected blow,
"And dy'd in beauty's early prime,
"A victim to her woe!

"Yet, ere fhe dy'd, alas!—to me
"One darling child fhe bore!
"My Emma is my only blifs!
"Say, need I tell thee more?"—

Oh

"Oh no!" the trembling youth exclaim'd,
"Live, Hubert, live in peace!
"'Tis I muſt ſeek the grave, for there
"Alone my woes can ceaſe!

"Oh Emma! lovely, lov'd, ador'd!
"Forgive this impious ſigh!
"Siſter! forgive my guilty love!
"For thee!—for thee!—I die!"—

He rais'd aloft the ſhining blade,
And as his ſire he cry'd!
Then in his boſom plung'd the ſteel,
And, in a moment—died!

No. XXVIII.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 1800.

"MR. SAUNTER,

"I AM a plain country gentleman, never much famed for book-learning, but always reckoned a good fenfible man in my way. I have lived year after year in my old family manfion, nor ever thought of vifiting London, or even enquiring what was done there, contenting myfelf with the account our country newfpaper *weekly* gives us of politics and public affairs; but two nephews, who came to fpend their vacation with me, and to one of whom I am godfather, befought me to take them to town for a week to fee fights, enforcing their requeft with many fage remarks, tending to remind me that I was once young myfelf, and

took

took the fame delight in fuch things as it was now their turn to feel. So remembering that I had all my life felt a ftrong affection for a brother of my mother, of whom I recollected nothing more than that he once took me to fee the lions in the Tower, and the Monument, and wifhing to purchafe the good-will of Charles and Phil. at fo eafy a rate, I put them and myfelf into a ftage which paffes my door, and was foon in fnug quarters in a very comfortable hotel in your great city.

"I would have enquired of the waiter what there was in London beft worth feeing, but my two young jackalls had already made provifion of much ufeful knowledge in that line, though for fome time I could not make out what they meant. One was loud in praife of the Panorama, while the other pofitively afferted that the Naumachia was preferable. I knew the lads went to a Claffical School, and I concluded they were debating on the critical propriety of a Greek expreffion; fo I afked what both words meant, for I do not pretend to much knowledge in Greek. The boys fmiled, and told me they were the names of two different reprefentations of the great triumph of the Englifh flag under the gallant Nelfon. They next agreed that the Androides was well worthy of attention, but the Eidophufikon feemed to be

the

the great point of their ambition. I was not willing to expose myself a second time, so I watched to catch some explanation of the puzzling affair. At length I comprehended that they were the names of some public exhibition; and promising that they should chuse which they would go to, they instantly decided in favour of the Eidophusikon. 'Beside, Uncle,' exclaimed Phil, 'the Sieur Comus exhibits his wonderful performances.'

'And pray,' enquired I, 'of what nature are these performances?'

'Oh my dear uncle!' exclaimed they both at once, 'they are miraculous, magnetical, philosophical, optical, pyrotechnical, steganographical, sympathetical, mathematical, oriental, pyramidical!'

"I made the young jackanapes set down the words for me, for I should never have remembered them. But I will not tire you, Mr. Saunter, with a list of my errors, occasioned by the prodigious increase of learning in this town of your's, where every amusement is a school of erudition, and one cannot pronounce the name of a public place without betraying the want of the dead languages. I look forward to what it will be when my nephews become fathers and uncles, by which time I suppose Greek and Latin will have wholly superseded

ſuperſeded English; and they may be, perhaps, thrown as much into the background as I am at preſent.

"Phil, the younger, who is a ſaucy dog, and loves to poſe me, came and told me the other day he had diſcovered a remedy for a very great inconvenience which diſtreſſed me very much, and adviſed me forthwith to purchaſe an Apolepſia Alexieaton. I concluded he was ſpeaking of Medicine, which is privileged to uſe cramp words. I trembled at the idea that he had been told I was likely to be carried off by apoplexy. There is perhaps ſome propriety in the obſcurity in which that ſcience is involved, as it is itſelf ſo myſterious and difficult a ſtudy; and perhaps it may be for the intereſt of the gentlemen of the Faculty to keep their patients in the dark by the uſe of the dead languages; but what need can there be, Mr. Saunter, of wrapping up in Greek the name of ſo common and uſeful a thing as a filtering-ſtone?

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble ſervant,

"PHILIP ENGLISH."

To

To Solomon Saunter, Esq.

« Sir,

« I was much pleafed with your paper on the prefent fafhionable education for young ladies, fince it enables me to back with your authority my own opinions on many fubjects. I have a fifter, Mr. Saunter, a pretty flim girl enough, who has perfuaded my father to let her learn the harp, which fhe prefers very much to the piano forte, as more graceful. I know much is always faid about the gracefulnefs of this inftrument; but, for my part, I think it requires uncommon dexterity to fave it from being awkward: however, it certainly fhews a fine arm to advantage. My fifter plays very prettily, and accompanies it with a very agreeable delicate voice; fo that nobody can with any reafon be angry with her for her harp-playing; but, alas! Mr. Saunter, a little while ago fhe befought my father to buy her a tambourine, affuring him that four leffons would perfect her in the art of playing on it.

' Four leffons, Sophy!' faid I; ' one quarter of an hour in a room by yourfelf, before a large looking-glafs,

looking-glass, is all you can want to teach you the management of the tambourine!'

'Law, brother,' replied she, 'you are always so odd! What do you mean?"

'Mean, my dear,' said I, 'why, that you are as good a judge of the beauty of attitudes as the black professors of the art; and it is the variety of the attitudes, not the effect of the sounds, that young ladies study!'

'I am sure, brother,' replied Sophy, 'it is a very enlivening accompaniment to a country dance.'

'True, my dear Sophy,' said I, 'but I would rather see you dancing yourself.'

'Well,' answered she, 'but Miss Gayloves and Miss Frolicks, and Miss Flutters, and hundreds more play the tambourine, and they all learned of the same Black Man.'

'Then,' returned I, 'were I a young lady, I would be my own teacher, that I might have some new attitudes; but after all, Sophy, would you be contented to play the tambourine as a charming accompaniment to country dances, if you were to be placed behind a curtain?'

'No, to be sure,' said she.

'And yet the accompaniment,' said I, 'would be the same; this proves, sister Sophy, that it is the sight, not the sound, that you think delightful—the eye, not the ear, you wish to gratify.'

'I am

'I am ſure,' retorted ſhe, 'there is no harm in it.'

'That I cannot ſay,' replied I; 'and ſince you will make me ſerious, I muſt own that every thing that infringes on the natural retiring delicacy of a modeſt Engliſh girl, contains and cauſes a great deal of harm. Sophy,' added I, 'I would not marry a girl who played the tambourine!'

"My father forbade the tambourine, Sophy wept, and I determined to lay the affair before Mr. Saunter, whoſe inſertion of this letter will prove his approbation of the opinions of

"His very humble ſervant,

"FREDERICK FIRM."

TO SOLOMON SAUNTER, Eſq.

"Sir,

"I am the ſon of an honeſt and induſtrious clothworker in one of the northern counties, and received from my father a good plain education, but not enough to make me

deſpiſe

despise the business which had enriched my parents. At a proper age I was made useful to him, and very soon earned my bread by my labour. I was not, however, the only son; another boy was born when I was fourteen, several intermediate children having died.

"This infant had the good fortune to be born near the time of a *general election*, and my father having considerable interest among the numerous voters of the manufacturing town he had lived in so long, the candidate for our Borough begged to be godfather to the child, and insisted on giving him his own name of Augustus Mountjoy—a circumstance which not a little flattered my mother. She was, as well as my father, originally of Scotch extraction; and every body knows that the Scottish firnames, having been borne by the Chiefs of the numerous clans, are looked upon by Heralds and Antiquarians as fully equal in respectability to any English firname of more elegant found; the good lady, therefore, pleased herself with remarking that the name of Cochrane would not disgrace the high-sounding baptismal names of her youngest born.

"The Member (for Mr. Mountjoy was elected) continued to be very fond of his little godson, and discovered innumerable perfections in him which

 proved

proved him destined for something superior to a clothworker. My father was inclined to remonstrate against a child's being taught that he could be raised to a superiority over his father; but my mother reminded him that it was in fact only regaining their former station in life, and the good-natured man relented, nay, at the return of a third election, which happened when Augustus was six months turned of eleven, Mr. Mountjoy persuaded my father to let him take the promising lad with him, and put him under the same tutor who was engaged to complete the education of his own two sons in his own house; promising, with an air of certainty, that he would place him in a very superior office! This offer was too flattering to be refused, and I felt a sensation something like envy when I saw Augustus seated by his patron's side, and whisking away to London behind four bright bay coach-horses. However, the habits of industry soon reconciled me to my lot; and ere long I began to prefer it to the apparently more splendid one of my brother: for I suspected that the boasted tuition of the pedagogue consisted in flogging Augustus for the faults of his young masters.

"However, the boy became a favourite both with father and sons, and, to do him justice, relaxed not in either the frequency or affectionateness of his epistles to us. When my father died, he transferred

ferred to me all his confidence and correspondence. Every year brought me accounts of my brother's increase in elegance and splendour. At length he married an elegant, amiable, penniless female, who had had the honour of being companion to Mrs. Mountjoy. Her want of money, however, did not diminish the grandeur or gaiety of his establishment, nor did the birth of five children, four daughters and a son, seem to make the least difference in their expenditure.

"After some years my father died, lamenting the distance, but commending the steady family affection of my brother. I found myself in easy circumstances, but strongly felt the want of society, and for some time meditated marriage; but marriage is a hard thing for a man at a certain time of life to resolve upon. I was now turned of forty; the habits of business had fixed themselves upon me, and I had neither leisure nor inclination to shake them off sufficiently to pay my court to the ladies. Money flowed in rapidly; and though I felt the pleasure natural to all men in the mere act of accumulation, yet when I used to balance my books, and see the extent of my wealth, I have heaved many a sigh of regret to think that those who would inherit it, were utter strangers to me.

"At length, in my fifty-fifth year, I determined

they should be strangers to me no longer; and converting all my property into cash, I disposed of the lease and goodwill of my premises to a young man who had been my foreman, and putting myself and my possessions into a mail-coach, was rapidly whirled towards London. From this vehicle, however, I descended ere I reached the metropolis, for my brains would not bear its velocity; and arrived at my brother's house by easy journies on the evening of the fifth day. London, which I had never seen, was a mine of wonder to me; but I remarked that my brother's house did not in appearance correspond with the grandeur of his description. A shabby footboy, with a farthing candle, ushered me upstairs, where I found my brother and his Leonora; but, alas! instead of the elegant form and polished manners I had been taught to expect, I saw a tall, thin, bony female dressed in the slatternly extreme of the present trapesing fashion, with all the affected cant of a milliner's shop-girl! I shrewdly suspected what I afterwards found to be true, that Leonora, instead of companion, had been lady's maid to Mrs. Mountjoy, and had taken up her lady's cast manners with her cloaths, both a little the worse for use, and a good deal the worse for the mode of wearing them. Both my brother and his Leonora assured me that, knowing of my coming, they had purposely avoided having any company, but that the next evening they were to have

have a grand rout. I enquired after the young people, and was told that the three eldeſt daughters and the ſon were at a ball, and the youngeſt daughter gone to bed, whither I retired at an early hour, fatigued with my journey, and diſmayed at the appearance of the family.

"The next morning I was introduced to Auguſtus Mountjoy, the ſecond ſon, and heir of the family name and honours, a pale, puny, ſickly boy of fourteen: Cherubinia, Dulcibella, and Rupercia were not yet viſible, from their laſt night's fatigue; but Sarah, a ſtout, freſh-coloured, good-humoured girl, whom they ſcarcely introduced to me at all, pleaſed me by her gaiety, health, and civil attentions. About twelve the three dancers made their appearance; and I found them, on my return from a ramble about the ſtreets, with Sarah for my companion, lolling on the ſofa in dirty white dreſſes, and reading over languidly ſome faſhionable Novel, which they were very ſolicitous to conceal. Cherubinia had very little of the cherub about her; at leaſt if cherubs reſemble her, I have no ambition to keep ſuch company. Dulcibella, neither ſweet nor fair, had a great deal of the vixen in her countenance and manner, and was a ſhort, ſtumpy, ill-made girl. Rupercia, ſo named out of compliment to me, being an attempt to ſoften my name into ſomething like elegance, reſembled her mother

in her perſon and manners, and was reckoned a beauty; but poor Sarah, undignified by any romantic name, was deſpiſed on all ſides, and was the only one that promiſed to be worth a farthing.

"By attention to their fine names, the three elder miſſes have rendered themſelves incapable of any one domeſtic office; it would be a ſhame for a Cherubinia to know the ingredients of a pudding, for Dulcibella to inſpect a butcher's bill, or for Rupercia to cut out a ſhirt; ſo that leaving theſe heroines, and their no leſs promiſing brother Auguſtus, to the ſolid ſatisfaction of high-ſounding names, I meditate retiring into the country with my niece Sarah, and leaving her my whole fortune, on condition that ſhe never chriſtens any one of her children by any of theſe heatheniſh appellations. One comfort I have, Mr. Saunter, that theſe elegant names are becoming ſo common, that in time I doubt not the real people of faſhion will reſort to Joan and Bridget as leaſt contaminated by the fellowſhip of the vulgar. I know a waſherwoman whoſe two daughters are named Henrietta and Sophia, and a good woman who ſells tripe, which ſhe ſends to her cuſtomers by her ſons Frederic and Achilles. Adieu, Mr. Saunter! Believe me

"Your conſtant reader,

"ROBERT COCHRANE."

No.

No. XXIX.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1800.

THE diſtreſſes ariſing from love have ſo often been the groundwork of tragic plots, that though, perhaps, the delineation of the progreſs of the paſſion itſelf has never been avowedly the object of any play-writer, yet it tends to leſſen the novelty of the idea in the tragedy of Count Baſil. That of De Monfort, however, cannot be liable to this complaint, ſince a t[illegible]without love is certainly a *black ſwan* in the [illegible]ons of criticiſm. The grand deſign of which this play, as well as Baſil and the Trial form a part, is to diſplay the power of the ſtronger paſſions of the mind, and the paſſion here delineated, is *hatred.*—Perhaps there is not a feeling more inconceivable than pure hatred. One can hardly imagine it to exiſt unat-

tended, or rather uninspired by envy, revenge, or wounded pride De Monfort who is made an amiable character, at leaſt one for whom the reader muſt be intereſted, is yet repreſented as under the dominion of this fiendlike paſſion. Perh ps it is but fair to give the words of the Introductory Diſcourſe relative to this very play.

« The laſt play, the ſubject of which is *hatred*, « will more clearly diſcover the nature and inten- « tion of my deſign. The riſe and progreſs of « this paſſion I have been obliged to give in retro- « ſpect, inſtead of repreſenting it all along in its « actual operation, as I could have wiſhed to have « done. But hatred is a paſſion of ſlow growth; « and to have exhibited it from its beginnings, « would have included a longer period than even « thoſe who are leaſt ſcrupulous about the limi- « tation of dramatic time, would have thought « allowable. I could not have introduced my « chief characters upon the ſtage as boys, and « then as men; th[illegible] paſſion muſt be kept « diſtinct from that diſlike which we conceive for « another when he has greatly offended us, and « which is almoſt always the companion of anger; « and alſo from that eager deſire to cruſh and in- « flict ſuffering on him who has injured us, which « conſtitutes revenge. This paſſion (*hatred*) as I « have conceived it, is that rooted and ſettled aver- « ſion

" ſion which, from oppoſition of character, aided by
" circumſtances of little importance, grows at laſt
" into ſuch antipathy and perſonal diſguſt, as makes
" him who entertains it, feel, in the preſence of
" him who is the object of it, a degree of torment
" and reſtleſſneſs which is inſufferable. It is a
" paſſion, I believe, leſs frequent than any other
" of the ſtronger paſſions; but in the breaſt where
" it does exiſt, it creates, perhaps, more miſery
" than any other. To endeavour to intereſt the
" mind for a man under the dominion of a paſſion
" ſo baleful, ſo unamiable, may ſeem, perhaps, re-
" prehenſible: I therefore beg it may be conſidered
" that it is the paſſion, and not the man, that is
" held up to our execration; and that this and
" every other bad paſſion, does more ſtrongly
" evince its pernicious and dangerous nature,
" when we ſee it thus counteracting and deſtroy-
" ing the good gifts of Heaven, than when it is
" repreſented as the ſuitable aſſociate of inmates
" in the breaſts as dark as itſelf. This remark
" will likewiſe be applicable [illegible] of the other
" plays belonging to my work, that are intended
" to follow. A decidedly wicked character can
" never be intereſting, and to employ ſuch for
" the diſplay of any ſtrong paſſion, would very
" much injure, inſtead of improve, the moral effect.
" In the breaſt of a bad man paſſion has, com-
"paratively

"paratively, little to combat; how then can it fhew "its ftrength?"

The juftnefs of thefe obfervations on the paffion of hatred will be readily acknowledged by all who read them. Whether the author has been able to keep this baleful fentiment utterly diftinct from envy and revenge, the mind of the reader muft decide for itfelf. Perhaps pure, unmixed hatred can hardly be conceived. Even in the bofom of the fallen angels, Milton mingles with their hatred of man a fentiment of jealoufy of the favour of God, and envy of the happinefs of their fituation; and perhaps the feelings of De Monfort towards Rezenvelt are a little fuffufed with the tincture of thofe two kindred paffions.

Let us now confider the ftrength of the characters on which the bafis of the play refts. As is very juftly obferved in the remarks quoted above, the paffion of hatred is "that rooted and fettled averfion, which from oppofition of character, aided by circumftances of little importance &c." The oppofition of character is well conceived, and juftly marked. De Monfort is a deep profound thinker, a man of a great mind, grafping at perfection, and with fuch ftrong natural endowments as juftify his pride, as far as pride can be juftifiable. His habit of viewing circumftances is rather ferious

than cheerful. He is not apt to admire nor to think acts of virtue above the common and expected efforts of his fellow-creatures---he is more hurt than amused by the follies he every where sees around him; but as his character unfolds, it possesses that grandeur which brings home the conviction to every bosom, that the approbation, the friendship of such a man would be invaluable---would more exalt the person so distinguished than the friendship of a thousand common characters.

Rezenvelt, on the contrary, gay, cheerful, open, amuses himself with the daily occurrences of life, and welcomes to his heart all who bring the ready passports of civility and good humour: not that Rezenvelt is devoid of observation or discrimination; on the contrary, he satirizes keenly, and has a just perception of the merit of virtue. But he can be satisfied with something short of that exquisite perfection, the search after which renders De Monfort's sensibility a fastidious delicacy, and deprives him of many sources of amusement and pleasure fully enjoyed by Rezenvelt. Other circumstances of opposition occur between them:--- De Monfort is of a family ancient, noble, and wealthy; Rezenvelt began the world in poverty, though raised by the deaths of several relations to wealth and rank equal to that of his enemy. Rivals they had been in their youthful exercises, and the

the pride of Rezenvelt refused to acknowledge any superiority in De Monfort. Since the accession of Rezenvelt to riches and title, some trifling circumstance had bred a quarrel between them, in which (decided by the sword) victory had been the lot of Rezenvelt, who gave to De Monfort a life rendered hateful to him by being the gift of one he detested. These are the circumstances that have arisen to ground this hatred upon, previous to the opening of the play, and of which the relation is most artfully interwoven into the work itself. The play begins with De Montfort's leaving the town of his residence to avoid such frequent intercourse with Rezenvelt, who is his townsman; and the first dialogue between his servant Manuel, and old Jerome, to whose house he is coming, displays his character in very strong colours. Manuel represents him as

"So difficult, capricious, and distrustful,
"He galls my nature; yet, I know not how,
"A secret kindness binds me to him still."

It appears, however, that he does not, as Jerome suspects, make such fair confession of the offence as wins a feeling heart: yet it seems that, when conscious of having wronged his servants, though he would make no immediate concession, yet when afterwards

afterwards they did him some slight service, his gratitude was overpowering.

> " And that, with all his faults, there sometimes come
> " Such bursts of natural goodness from his heart,
> " As might engage a harder churl than I
> " To serve him still."

This dialogue, which so naturally unfolds many little gracious traits of De Monfort's character, is broken by his arrival, and the habitual sternness of his manner instantly appears. Instead of lamenting the deceased wife of old Jerome, he says, in answer to the old man's expostulation—

> " Is she not with the dead—the quiet dead,
> " Where all is peace? Not e'en the impious wretch,
> " Who tears the coffin from its earthy vault,
> " And strews the mould'ring ashes to the winds,
> " Can break their rest!"

a remark which plainly shews the unquiet state of his own mind. The interview with Freberg, a friendly acquaintance both of De Monfort and Rezenvelt, still further displays the gloomy reserve of De Montfort's character arising from internal misery—

a misery

a misery which strikes every observer as legibly written on his countenance. Old Jerome at first remarks,

"Ah Manuel, what an alter'd man is here!
"His eyes are hollow, and his cheeks are pale!"

The next morning he learns from a servant that Rezenvelt is in the neighbourhood, whither he had retired to shun him; and the intelligence affects him to a degree of wildness that betrays the strength of the sentiment that actuates him. Freberg, who just at this crisis repeats his visit, remarks the discomposure in De Monfort's countenance, and urges him by the ties of friendship to open all his inmost soul. De Monfort replies,

"Freberg, thou know'st not man—not Nature's man;
"But only him who, in smooth, studied works
"Of polish'd sages, shines deceitfully
"In all the splendid foppery of virtue.
"That man was never born, whose secret soul,
"With all its motley treasure of dark thoughts,
"Foul fantasies, vain musings, and wild dreams,
"Was ever open to another's ken.
"Away, away!—it is delusion all!"

Freberg, wholly unacquainted with the enmity between De Monfort and Rezenvelt, proposes to bring

bring him to join the party; but the emotion this occasions cannot pass unnoticed, and Freberg apologizes. The short speeches that follow are too excellent and marking not to be quoted.

De Mon. "What is't to me
"Whether I meet with such a thing as Rezenvelt,
"To-day, to-morrow, every day, or never?"
Freb. "In truth, I thought you had been well with him;
"He prais'd you much."
De Mon. "I thank him for his praise. Come let us move:
"This chamber is confin'd, and airless grown.
"I hear a stranger's voice!" *(Starting.)*
Freb. "'Tis Rezenvelt:
"Let him be told that we are gone abroad."
De Mon. *(Proudly)* "No—Let him enter!"

The scene that follows well deserves quotation, but it is impossible to transcribe all the little touches of nature which abound in this admirable play. De Monfort's soliloquy after the departure of Freberg and Rezenvelt, shews on what trifles the mind will dwell, when preoccupied by one strong passion.

"Oh the side glance of that detested eye—
"That conscious smile—that full insulting lip!
"It touches every nerve—it makes me mad!"

The

The second act introduces to us the Lady Jane De Monfort, sister to the hero of the piece, for whose nobly-conceived and truly-exalted character we had partly been prepared by some previous compliments scattered through the preceding scenes. It seems that De Monfort had left his home, where this sister usually presided, during an accidental absence of her's; and she, having been privately apprized by Manuel of the perturbation of her brother's mind, comes in quest of him, and consents to remain under disguise of a thick veil at a *fête* given by the Countess Freberg, to which De Monfort is invited. The veneration, for it is more than admiration, which Freberg expresses for her, rouses a sort of jealousy in the bosom of the Countess; which is, though perhaps rather obscurely, made a second cause of the great catastrophe of the play. The opposition between the characters of Rezenvelt and De Monfort is again displayed in the satirical style in which the former describes the company, and the gloomy retort the latter makes on Rezenvelt's remarking that he would not grace his gaiety with a smile.

De Mon. "Nay, think not, Rezenvelt, there is no smile
"I can bestow on thee:—there is a smile—
"A smile of nature, too, which I can spare,
"And yet, perhaps, thou wilt not thank me for it."

The

The ironical reply of Rezenvelt is peculiarly adapted to irritate ſuch a temper as De Monfort's.

Rez. "Not thank thee! It were ſurely moſt ungrateful
"No thanks to pay for nobly giving me
"What, well we ſee, hath coſt thee ſo much pain:
"For Nature hath her ſmiles, of birth more painful
"Than bittereſt execrations."

The introduction of Jane is beautiful, and the ſpirited and feeling confeſſion that De Monfort makes of her merits and his obligations to her, while he yet knows her not, gains the higheſt ſympathy for him. It diſplays all the warmth, all the affection of his character, as much as it exalts the object of his praiſe;—the natural conſequence of this is the diſcovery of Jane, and the ſcene changes, too abruptly for ſcenic effect, to De Monfort's private apartments, where he enters diſordered, and followed by Jane. Her pleadings to be admitted to his confidence are moſt exquiſite; but if I were to quote all that is worthy of being ſelected, however highly I might gratify my readers, theſe papers would no longer be the work of Solomon Saunter. When ſhe finds him inflexible, ſhe adviſes him to let it paſs. He anſwers—

"It will not paſs away—'twill haunt me ſtill!

Jane.

Jane. " Oh, fay not fo! for I will haunt thee too,
" And be to it fo clofe an adverfary,
" That, tho' I wreftle darkling with the fiend,
" I fhall o'ercome it!"

Some words that efcape him render her folicitations now more preffing:—he fpeaks of a raging paffion

" That hath made his nightly couch
" A place of torment!"

This leads her to fuppofe it love; but he replies

" A lover, fayft thou?
" No, it is hate! black, lafting, deadly hate
" Which thus hath driven me forth from kindred peace,
" From focial pleafure, from my native home,
" To be a fullen wanderer on the earth,
" Avoiding all men, curfing, and accurft!"

Nothing fure can more ftrongly portray the terrible difquiet of his mind than this forcible and impreffive fpeech; yet it is a difquiet with which the remorfe of confcience, that he evidently feels, leads every hearer to fympathize. The mind of De Monfort appears fo noble, fo formed for generofity and affection, that we lament to find fuch a being fo warped afide from the grand defigns of Nature by one evil propenfity, and that fo productive of mifery to himfelf.

No.

No. XXX.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 1800.

Criticiſm on De Monfort continued.

THE noble, the admirable Jane De Monfort, ſtruck by the confeſſion her brother had made, expoſtulates with him in the following exquiſite lines :—

Jane. " De Monfort, this is fiendlike, frightful, terrible!
" What being, by th' Almighty Father form'd,
" Of fleſh and blood, created e'en as thou art,
" Could in thy breaſt ſuch horrid tempeſt wake,
" Who art thyſelf his fellow ?
" Unknit thoſe brows, and ſpread thoſe wrath-clench'd hands ;
" Some ſprite accurſt within thy boſom mates

"To work its ruin—strive with it, my brother!
"Strive bravely with it—drive it from thy breast!—
"'Tis the degrader of a noble heart
"Curse it, and bid it part!"

These lines can never be sufficiently admired. The accurate observation of nature in the sixth of them is hardly to be equalled; and the force, the animation of the whole speech is admirable. She obtains the name of the object of De Monfort's hatred, which it is remarkable he had cautiously forborne to mention, in a way so simple, that it could only have occurred to a poet of nature, such as the bard now under consideration.

"Whom didst thou say?"

Thus leading him to suppose the name had previously escaped him, his strong reluctance vanished, and he naturally answers—

"Oh, that detested Rezenvelt!"

and proceeds to give an account of the progress of his antipathy to him, in which it appears that every action, however trivial, had served to strengthen the dislike which, perhaps, arose, in the first instance, from mere opposition of nature; yet, strongly as the art of the poet impels the reader to

to fympathize with De Monfort in the diftrefs of his mind, it is fufficiently evident to the moft cafual obferver, that the wretched being fuffers fo feverely from the influence of a moft malignant paffion, not properly checked, or rather wantonly indulged, and moft ungratefully heightened by the generous forbearance of Rezenvelt, who had difarmed his adverfary in a duel. On the recital of this circumftance, De Monfort breaks into the following dreadful expreffions:—

"Until that day—till that accurfed day,
"I knew not half the torment of that hell
"Which burns within my breaft—Heaven's lightning blaft him!"

Jane. "Oh this is horrible!—Forbear—forbear,
"Left Heaven's vengeance light upon thy head
"For this moft impious wifh!"

De Mon. "Then let it light!
"Torments more fell than I have felt already
"It cannot fend. To be annihilated—
"What all men fhrink from—to be duft, be nothing,
"Were blifs to me, compar'd to what I am!"

Jane. "Oh! wouldft thou kill me with thofe dreadful words?"

De Mon. "Let me but once upon his ruin look,
"Then clofe mine eyes for ever!"

 This

This terrible energy affects Jane almost to fainting, and he is extremely alarmed. After some most affecting broken phrases, in which all the warmth of his heart, and all his real affection for his sister appear, so as again to call forth that sympathy his dreadful violence had almost repelled, he asks affectionately

"What shall I do?"

Jane. "Call up thy noble spirit,
"Rouse all the generous energy of virtue,
"And with the strength of heaven-endued man,
"Repel the hideous foe!—Be great, be valiant!
"Oh, if thou couldst, e'en shrouded as thou art
"In all the sad infirmities of nature,
"What a most noble creature wouldst thou be!"

In what a charming light do these lines place the characters both of Jane De Monfort and her brother; and how fully is the best end of tragedy answered in a play that affords occasions for such sentiments as these, while at the same time it makes the most powerful appeals to the feelings!

It would have been impossible, even for the steady temper of De Monfort to have held out long against such a pleader; and it was the aim of the writer to carry the dreadful effects of hatred as high as they could go: an interruption is therefore

fore here judiciously given to a scene which the reader must have wished to last for ever, and another little view is given of the Countess Freberg's illiberal jealousy of Jane De Monfort. She hints at the probability that Jane is rather come to meet a lover in Rezenvelt, than to sooth an unhappy brother in De Monfort, and determines to give currency to the idea.

A sort of reconciliation is now proposed, and effected by Jane and Freberg; and Rezenvelt, with generous readiness, waits on De Monfort for the purpose. The unhappy man's irresolution, reluctancy, and perturbation are admirably depictured in the scene previous to Rezenvelt's arrival; but these are beauties that admit not of quotation. Broken sentences, rising ideas not half expressed, impatience with every thing around, and increasing emotion when the step of Rezenvelt is heard, are most inimitably seized on by this true poet of nature and of passion. The great trial now approaches. De Monfort confesses he owes his life to Rezenvelt, and offering his hand, adds—

"Take this from one who boasts no feeling warmth,
"But never will deceive."

Rez. (*with emotion*) "Away with hands! I'll have thee
to my breast!
"Thou art, upon my faith, a noble spirit!"

 And

And here how every heart muſt wiſh that De Monfort had really given way, and met with equal feeling the readineſs of his adverſary; but he ſhrinks back—

"Nay, if you pleaſe, I am not ſo prepar'd—
"My nature is of temp'rature too cold!"

and goes on to profeſs good-will and reſpect. Rezenvelt, checked in the emanation of his warmth, feels the ſarcaſtic irony of his nature revive, and anſwers in a ſpeech too powerfully calculated to irritate the feelings of De Monfort.

Rez. "Well, be it ſo, De Monfort; I'm contented:
"I'll take thy hand, ſince I can have no more.
"I take of worthy men whate'er they give—
"Their heart I gladly take, if not their hand—
"If that too is withheld, a courteous word,
"Or the civility of placid looks;
"And if e'en theſe are too great favours deem'd,
"Faith, I can ſit me down contentedly
"With plain and homely greeting, or God ſave ye!"

De Mon. "By the good light, he makes a jeſt of it!"

And ſo end, to Freberg and Lady Jane, all hopes of a cordial reconciliation. No comments are made, but the parties ſoon after ſeparate. Rezenvelt

velt afterwards in confidence declares to Freberg, that had De Monfort accepted his offered friendship,

> "He from that very moment had forborne
> "All oppofition, pride-provoking jeft,
> "Contemning careleffnefs, and rude offence!"

and gives an account of the progrefs of their hatred, concluding with—

> "In fhort, I ftill have been th' oppofing rock
> "O'er which the ftream of his o'erflowing pride
> "Hath foam'd and bellow'd."

This, undoubtedly, mingles a fpecies of jealoufy in the hate which De Monfort entertains for Rezenvelt; and indeed, without fome fuch concomitant fentiment, one is at a lofs to conceive how fuch hatred could exift.

De Monfort's irritated mind now difplays itfelf in a fcene with the fervants, and afterwards Grimbald is introduced, an artful knave, who having a favour to afk, and underftanding the enmity between the two Lords, announces himfelf as hopelefs, becaufe he has offended Rezenvelt. This plea, as the wretch had forefeen, moft ftrongly induces De Monfort to liften to him, and Grimbald expreffes his wonder, and infinuates the tale which

we

we are led to suppose has originated from the Countess Freberg's reports, that Rezenvelt is believed to be contracted to the Lady Jane. De Monfort's instant agony is here really fine.

De Mon. "'Tis false! 'tis basely false!
"What wretch could drop from his envenom'd tongue
"A tale so damn'd! It chokes my breath!
"What wretch did tell it thee?"

And hearing that the rumour had gained credit universally, he pauses, staggers backward, and falls into a chair. Here follows another exquisite scene. Jane is seen coming towards the house in company with Rezenvelt and Freberg: Grimbald steals away alarmed at De Monfort's emotion, and Jerome remains with his master. His observations on them—the sound of their footsteps—Rezenvelt's hateful voice—his anger at Jane's speaking cheerily—his agony when the Marquis takes her hand—his suddenly letting go of old Jerome (whom he had held) so that he falls against the wall—his seeming inhumanity—and his soliloquy when they are no longer in sight, are almost unrivalled. Reflecting on the appearances which corroborate Grimbald's assertion, leads him to recal the former days of their mutual affection. What can surpass the true pathos of the following lines?

"We

"We quarrell'd once, and when I could no more
"The alter'd coldneſs of her eye endure,
"I crept o' tip-toe to her chamber door,
"And when ſhe aſk'd who gently knock'd—Oh! Oh!
"Who could have thought of this!"

(Sinks into a chair, and weeps.)

A cold-blooded poet would have ſeized this opportunity to make a fine deſcription of their reconciliation; but how ſuperior is the ſimplicity, the true feeling of the above lines to any deſcription however highly wrought! To this torrent of feeling, however, ſucceeds a tempeſt of paſſion. He ſtarts furiouſly from his ſeat, and the reſolution to put an end to Rezenvelt's life ſeems at that inſtant to be born; yet De Monfort has a natural antipathy to the ſight of blood, as well as natural humanity that ſeem powerfully to repel the ſtronger and more irritable paſſions. The conflict is thus forcibly drawn:—

"Hell's direſt torment ſeize th' infernal villain!—
"Deteſted of my ſoul! I will have vengeance!
"I'll cruſh thy ſwelling pride! I'll ſtill thy vaunting!
"I'll do a deed of blood!—Why ſhrink I thus?
"If, by ſome ſpell, or magic ſympathy,
"Piercing the lifeleſs figure on that wall

"Would

"Would pierce his bosom too, would I not cast it?

(Throwing a dagger against the wall.)

"Shall groans and blood affright me? No, I'll do it!
"Tho' gasping life beneath my pressure heav'd,
"And my soul shudder'd at the horrid brink,
"I would not flinch!—Fie! this recoiling nature!
"Oh that his sever'd limbs were strewn in air,
"So as I saw him not!"

At this moment, when he has been painfully working up his mind to a dreadful resolution, Rezenvelt enters, and without further hesitation, De Monfort, on seeing him, draws his sword, and rushes furiously upon him, exclaiming—

"Detested robber! now all forms are over!
"Now open villany—now open hate!
"Defend thy life!"

Rezenvelt, though surprised, is cool and skilful, and disarms his headlong adversary: he takes away his sword, promising to call the next evening, and return it, and justify himself from any wrong he may be charged with. De Monfort stands in silent stupefaction. He comprehends nothing from a servant who comes to him for orders, but the sudden and abrupt departure of Rezenvelt, who is going

going to walk alone through a gloomy wood, where, as the servant says—

"Foul murders have been done, and ravens scream,
"And things unearthly, stalking thro' the night,
"Have fear'd the lonely traveller from his wits!"

Of all the servant's enquiries, nothing seems to strike De Monfort. He asks whether Rezenvelt goes alone, and on being answered in the affirmative, a horrible determination seems to fix itself in his mind. The servant, alarmed at the change of his countenance, enquires after his health. He quickly dismisses the man, walks rapidly two or three times across the stage, then seizes his dagger from the wall, looks stedfastly at the point, and goes hastily away.

I know the German plays have fixed a great odium on this sort of marginal directions; and where many minutes are to be consumed in a sentimental dumb shew, for which written orders are given, and nothing left to the judgment of the performer, or the feelings of the reader, there can be nothing more absurd—tragedy dwindles down into a mere pantomime; but this instance is happily rescued from the charge of similar ridicule. The moment when a great soul forms a resolution inimical to its better feelings, and which requires

all its firmest powers to accomplish, is not the moment when it can evaporate in words. A man like De Monfort, never open, never communicative, shudders to avow, even to himself, the dreadful purpose of his heart; and we have seen in the most admired poets instances of this silence, which have been felt by the best judges to be superior to any speeches. An epic poet can, however, describe in his own person the feelings and conduct of the silent hero; but in the case before us, some marginal direction must be given, or De Monfort's abrupt quitting the stage would have no meaning:---as it is, no words could so forcibly express all the terrible tumult of his mind, the war of passion, the utter subversion of reason.

I cannot regret that the singular merits of this play have led me beyond the bounds to which I at first intended to confine myself; nor will my readers regret that a third paper will be embellished with quotations from De Monfort.

No.

No. XXXI.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 1800.

Criticism on De Monfort concluded.

WE come now to the fourth Act, in which the scene is happily chosen, as in Count Basil, to heighten the horrors of the deed. The wood, so poetically described at the close of the last Act by De Monfort's servant, is now before us :—it is moonlight—a wild path shaded with trees De Monfort enters. His soliloquy is finely conceived, and admirably expressed. The frequent breaks in the metre, the ready superstition with which he believes the screechowl instinctively drawn to scenes of horror— But its merits must be read to be fully judged of, nor can I resist the temptation of transcribing passages at least from it.

" Deep settled shadows rest across the path,
" And thickly-tangled boughs o'erhang this spot !

" Oh

"Oh that a tenfold gloom did cover it—
"That, 'midst the murky darkness, I might strike,
"As in the wild confusion of a dream,
"Things horrid, bloody, terrible, do pass,
"As tho' they pass'd not, nor impress the mind
"With the fix'd clearness of reality.

(*An owl screams.*)

"What sound is that?—It is the screechowl's cry!—
"Foul bird of night, what spirit guides thee hither?
"Art thou instinctive drawn to scenes of horror?—
"I've heard of this!"

Nothing can be more poetical than the allusion to the wild confusion of a dream. Then again, the falling leaves, the distant river alarm his soul, and he exclaims—

"Oh mysterious night!
"Thou art not silent—many tongues hast thou!"

Again he wishes for a raging storm—

"For this pale light,
"This calm distinctness of each stilly thing,
"Is terrible!—(*Starting.*)—Footsteps are near—
"He comes!—he comes!—I'll watch him farther on—
"I cannot do it here!" (*Exit.*)

This irresolution is admirable, and indeed every line in this exquisite soliloquy is truly well imagined.

imagined. One sees here a great soul struggling with the most painful and repulsive passions, yet which have been indulged till the unhappy victim feels a sort of grandeur and merit in obeying their dreadful dictates. But the indecision of guilt still predominates, and outward circumstance deeply affects a mind which yet resolves to act decisively. The perturbed feelings of De Monfort are finely contrasted with the easy carelessness of Rezenvelt, who enters presently after, and comments on the screechowl's cry, the moon, the clouds, and the coming storm with the cheerfulness of a mind unoppressed by any bad passion. Though he certainly loved not De Monfort, the natural levity of his temper prevented the sentiment of dislike from rising so high as to hatred. He follows, unconscious of the fate that awaits him, and the scene changes to the inside of a Convent. Here, amid all the horrors of a stormy night, and a funereal service, a Sister rushes in, and announces the cry of murder; nor will she be persuaded that "'twas but the varied voices of the storm." And perhaps there cannot be a finer painting than her speech:—

"Oh no! for twice it call'd, so loudly call'd
"With horrid strength, beyond the pitch of nature,
"And "murder!—murder!" was the dreadful cry!
"A third time it return'd with feeble strength,

"But o'the sudden ceas'd, as tho' the words
"Were rudely smother'd in the grasped throat;
"And all was still again, save the wild blast,
"Which at a distance growl'd.
"Oh, it will never from my mind depart—
"The dreadful cry all i'the instant still'd,
"For then, so near some horrid deed was done,
"And none to rescue!"

Here is a plain and simple delineation of facts—no highly coloured painting, no exaggeration of feeling; but it impresses the mind most forcibly, and the report is corroborated by the entrance of two Monks, one of whom has seen the corpse, and the other the murderer. Nothing can be more ably seized than the workings of terror in these two men, and the unwillingness with which, though reinforced by two others, they go to endeavour to take the murderer:—but to quote all the master-strokes in this play, would be to transcribe nearly the whole of it. At length the Monks bring in De Monfort. He has been obstinately silent to those who took him;—to the enquiries of the Abbess, he abruptly answers—

"I have no name!"

The lay-sister, still recurring to her alarms, repeats

repeats the cry of murder; and De Monfort, ſtarting, exclaims—

"He calls again!"——

Siſter. "No, he did call; but now his voice is ſtill'd—

"'Tis paſt!"—

De Mon. "'Tis paſt!"

What delineations of remorſe could expreſs more than theſe few ſimple words? What eloquence could convey ſo much? The body of Rezenvelt is now brought in; and—— But it is impoſſible to follow ſtep by ſtep the marks of horror in De Monfort. The mode of his confeſſion when they ſhew him the ghaſtly face, covering his face, and exclaiming—

"Oh do not, do not! Veil it from my ſight!

"Put me to any agony but this!"

his unconſciouſneſs of what further is ſaid to him—his ſtrong reluctance to be left alone with the body—his requeſt to have it covered, becauſe

"The unclos'd eyes do ſtare upon me ſtill!"

are all among the fineſt touches of nature, and required at once a heart to feel, judgment to ſelect, and ability to execute. Left alone with the body, his reflections are moſt natural; and in

 a ſituation

a ſituation ſo dreadful, a prey to the moſt agonizing remorſe, the firm mind of De Monfort is ſeized by the wildeſt terrors: he fancies groans, that the cloth moves,—he flies in agony to tear it off, and then

"All ſtill beneath!
"Nought is there here but fix'd and grizzly death!
"How ſternly fix'd!—Oh, thoſe glaz'd eyes!
"They look me ſtill——"

In the following Act the noble, the incomparable Jane De Monfort, a character unrivalled in dramatic works, is made acquainted with the dreadful crime of her darling brother. Even in this terrible ſituation, her fortitude does not deſert her; yet her words, though few, are moſt impreſſive. She is taken into the Convent, and we again behold the man of ſorrow. Again he ſpeaks in ſoliloquy; and after a while—

"This little term of nature's agony
"Will ſoon be o'er, and what is paſt, is paſt!
"But ſhall I then, on the dark lap of earth,
"Lay me to reſt in ſtill unconſciouſneſs,
"Like ſenſeleſs clod that doth no preſſure feel
"From wearing foot of daily paſſenger—
"Like ſteeped rock o'er which the breaking waves
"Bellow and foam unheard?—Oh! would I could!"

The

The entrance of his faithful ſervant Manuel interrupts his reflections; but one ſole idea ruſhes to his mind, and he exclaims—"Art thou alone?" in a voice that prepares the hearer for the agonies that he feels in learning the near approach of his ſiſter.

"This is too much—all I can bear but this!
"It muſt not be!—Run, and prevent her coming!—
"Say, he who is detained a priſoner here,
"Is one to her unknown. I now am nothing—
"I am a man of holy claims bereft—
"Out from the pale of ſocial kindred caſt,
"Nameleſs and horrible!
"Tell her De Monfort far from hence is gone
"Into a deſolate and diſtant land,
"Ne'er to return again.—Fly! tell her this,
"For we muſt meet no more!"

At this moment Jane burſts in, followed by Freberg, Abbeſs, and Nuns. The dignity of her manner ſoon, however, drove every one away; and ſhe receives her wretched brother to her boſom. A noble ſcene now enſues: De Monfort urges her to quit him by every argument drawn from the diſgracefulneſs of his ſituation; but this

 admirable

admirable woman, feizing the hand of her brother, makes the following animated fpeech :—

"De Monfort, hand in hand we have enjoy'd
"The playful term of infancy together;
"And in the rougher path of ripen'd years,
"Have been each other's ftay.—Dark lowers our fate,
"And terrible the ftorm that gathers o'er us;
"But nothing, till that lateft agony
"That fevers thee from Nature, fhall unloofe
"This fix'd and facred hold—In thy dark prifon-houfe,
"In the terrific face of arm'd law,
"Yea, on the fcaffold, if it needs muft be,
"I never will forfake thee!"

De Mon. "Heaven blefs thy generous foul, my noble Jane!"

And who does not exclaim in the fame terms as De Monfort? He promifes fortitude for her fake; and fhe tells him,

"Yes, thou art noble ftill!"

But confcience prefenting to him the terror of futurity, fhe endeavours to fix his mind on the mercy of God. He, defpairing, wifhes to prevail on her to tell him there is hope that even murder may be pardoned. At fome noife fhe moves to retire

retire by a side door; but De Monfort, all his terrors awakened, cries out—

"Not there—not there—the corpse—the bloody corpse!"

Jane. "What, lies he there? Unhappy Rezenvelt!"

De Mon. "A sudden thought has struck across my mind!—
"How came it not before? Unhappy Rezenvelt!
"Say'st thou but this?"

Jane. "What should I say? He was an honest man!
"I still have thought him such—as such lament him!
(*De Monfort utters a deep groan.*)
"What means this heavy groan?"

De Mon. "It hath a meaning!"

and conveys more than the most elaborate speech could have done; it speaks all his horror at finding that jealousy unfounded, which was the chief instigator of his dreadful crime—it speaks the loudest warning to all who can feel, to check the career of passion in the first instan[illegible] warned by the baleful effects it is capab[illegible]cing on so slight a foundation. The [illegible] Monfort, who, from agitation, has b[illegible] stream of life," not seen, but describ[illegible]e agitated Monks and Nuns, is free from [illegible] stigma that blots the character of Basil—suicide, the worst and most unpardonable kind of murder!

* I am aware that, treating the subject critically,

Basil,

Basil, as a soldier, had perhaps no other resource, and that in a play, professedly written to delineate the baneful effects of indulging the powerful passions of the mind, the conduct of Basil is not held forth as a pattern for imitation; but there is something so seducing to almost all minds in the glitter of false heroism, which has been so perpetually attired in the brilliant robes of honour, that suicide ought never to pass without reprobation; and as the surviving characters in the tragedy of Basil could not, without a violation of propriety, blame his last fatal act, however they might regret it, I must confess that it appears to me that the fortitude of De Monfort, in his manner of supporting his misery, is an effort of true heroism that exalts his character, and raises this piece (if no other merit did), to a superiority, in point of merit, above that of Basil. But in fact, though perhaps pure and unmixed hatred seldom exists, the malignant passions cause infinitely more mischief [illegible] than the passion of love, powerful [illegible]posed to be; and the character of [illegible] affords a lesson which we should [illegible] to take to ourselves. It is observable [illegible]tually his mind recurs to the causes of the [illegible]ike he feels towards Rezenvelt; and by thus eternally feeding and keeping it alive, it becomes at length a feeling too powerful to be overcome. This habit of dwelling on subjects of uneasiness

uneaſineſs and diſcomfort is too univerſal, and is the greateſt hindrance in the world to that benevolence which alone can confer happineſs and peace.

To return to the critical merits of the work. The conduct of Jerome and Manuel at the ſight of the dead body of their maſter, and particularly Jerome's horror, when by miſtake he looks on Rezenvelt, ſtrikes home to the heart, with the conviction that it is drawn from the eternal fountain of nature. The character of the Lady Jane, finely conceived, and admirably executed, is at once original and natural :—a true heroiſm is the foundation of it, and in all ſhe ſays and does, the native dignity of virtue raiſes her to that ſuperiority which ſeems to be ſo univerſally allowed to her. I cannot imagine it poſſible to draw a character which can combine more grandeur and more true feeling ;—not that raving ſenſibility, which in moſt modern dramatic works approaches to infanity, but that genuine tenderneſs of heart, which compels the ſympathy of the beholders. It is Jane's unwearied affection for De Monfort, her high eſteem for his character, her pity for his errors, her wiſh to wean him from them, her conviction of his real worth, that gives to a man ſo obſcured by one powerful and malignant paſſion, that intereſt which he cannot fail to excite. To cite

cite passages in support of the opinion I have given of Jane's character, would be to transcribe nearly her whole part, and all that is said of her by the other persons of the drama. Rezenvelt's character is well sustained; and as it is certainly a more amiable one than De Monfort's, it can be only the love of Jane that throws a veil over the harsher traits of her brother's mind.

The language of this play is strong and nervous, well adapted to the sentiments it is intended to convey. The passages already quoted sufficiently prove this. Quotations might be multiplied without end. Some inaccuracies there may be: *piteous* is used for *pitiful*. There are some inversions needlessly used, which add no poetical dignity to the verse—

"The name of Rezenvelt employ, and prosper."

But it is invidious to dwell on such trifling faults, or even those of rather more consequence, which arise from the abrupt changes of the scene. When De Monfort retires to bed in one line, and begins his breakfast in the next, without the intervention of a single speech, or any thing but a marginal direction—when De Monfort and his sister discover each other one moment at the Countess Freberg's assembly, and are, the next, confidentially

conversing in De Monfort's private apartment, without the slightest circumstance intervening, it is apt to shock the imagination. But the merits of this play are of a cast far superior to these. A deep research into the heart of man, acuteness to distinguish, and skill to portray those hidden motives which, often unknown even to ourselves, prompt our actions—a clear perception of the first slight workings of passion—a just discrimination of character—bold and impressive language—chaste yet forcible imagery—just principle—the power of exciting sympathy—these are the merits of the performance now before us—a performance which while, on its own account, it demands the applause of the public, challenges their wonder and regret that its author should retire behind the veil of obscurity from fame so well earned, so justly bestowed.

Mr. Solomon Saunter had hoped that the credit of these unowned productions would have been given to him. Miss Baillie, by affixing her name to a new edition, has robbed him of that pleasing expectation.

END OF VOL. I.